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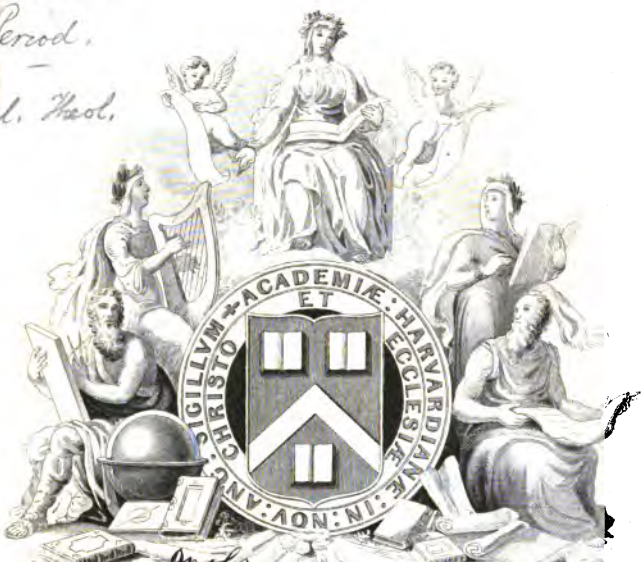

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The Gift of the
Revd Fred. D. Huntington D.D.
Plummer Professor
in
Harvard College,
December, 1856.

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F. D. Huntington —
from his friend
David Reed —
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THE

UNITARIAN ADVOCATE.

EDITED BY

Quincy

REV. EDMUND Q. SEWALL.

VOL. I.

"God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless us, in turning away every one of us from our iniquities." PETER.

"We can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth." PAUL.

BOSTON,

PUBLISHED BY BOWLES & DEARBORN, 72 WASHINGTON STREET.
ALSO BY HILLIARD AND BROWN, CAMBRIDGE; DAVID FELT, NEW YORK; JOHN MORTIMER, PHILADELPHIA; JOHN N. TOY AND W. F. LUCAS, BALTIMORE; PISHEY THOMPSON, WASHINGTON, D. C.; AND THOMAS COUSINS, CHARLESTON, S. C.

1828.

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1856. Dec. 1.
Gift of
Prof. F. D. Huntington
of Cambridge.

BOSTON,
Press of Isaac R. Butts & Co.

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THE

UNITARIAN ADVOCATE.

VOL. I. JANUARY, 1828. No. I.

PREFACE.

WE have intimated that the Unitarian Advocate is published because such a work is needed. By this we do not mean to imply that other works, similar in character and objects, and extensively circulated already, are chargeable with the smallest deficiency. We cordially unite in the common sentiment of esteem for these very important and useful publications. The talent, diligence, and zeal which the Christian Examiner especially has long exhibited, warrant the belief that it will remain a most effective advocate of those good designs which we wish to see advanced. But the great increase in the number of those who read on religious subjects and are earnestly watching the progress of opinion, demands and authorizes a corresponding multiplication of the helps to inquiry. It is as an auxiliary, and in no degree as a substitute, that we would be known. This work will differ from others, rather in the extent of its plan, and some modifications in style and form, than in any thing essential to its character and purpose. We shall, as far as possible, confine ourselves to what belongs

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to religious opinion and duty exclusively. Though we shall still rejoice to have it done by others, we do not intend ourselves to bring topics properly literary, into alliance with religious subjects. Our aim is to present the general reader, who has little time and means to spare for studious investigation, with all the information on religious subjects which he may want as an inquirer interested in the controversies of the times; and also to furnish something which shall awaken and cherish those devout and benevolent sentiments which are of eternal concern. We shall not attempt to strike out new paths, but be content with pursuing more closely such as are already opened.

While we write always as Unitarians, loving the truths we receive, we are determined to do no wrong by our prejudice or passion to those who reject and gainsay what we value. But let it be remembered, that a plain statement of the errors we oppose is our duty. This will not fail to give pain to such as hold them in the same esteem which we pay to the truth. There is no way by which you can thoroughly satisfy one who differs from you on subjects so interesting as those we shall discuss, but either by receiving his views as yours, or by saying nothing about them. We can do neither conscientiously. If we are then careful to represent opinions in their true light, without exaggeration and false mixtures, we may offend, but we cannot justly be deemed uncharitable. They are most unreasonable, who will set down all which is said against a doctrine as so much malice toward the friends of that doctrine. We intend never to confound the character of the believer with the fault in his creed. We hold it as indisputable, that excellence of the purest

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and highest kind may and does exist among those whose sentiments we regard as unscriptural.

Happily for the Unitarian, his peculiar views of Christianity do not forbid, but require him to manifest the kindest regard for other denominations, and leave him at full liberty to do justice to piety wherever it is found, and however associated with erroneous opinions. Some who stand opposed to us in creed have seen fit to brand us with harsh epithets for our creed's sake, and to class Unitarians with Pagans, Mahometans, Deists, the enemies of the gospel. They strike at what is most dear to us, our christian name, and disavow, not only all our pretensions to a correct faith, (which is very tolerable) but even the most sincere claims to a pious character, which to an honest man who is conscious that he fears God from the heart, must be hard to be borne. Let not the Unitarian retaliate in kind. Let us be scrupulous, in our judgments of their character, not to overlook any fair proofs of goodness, nor too eagerly to catch at any signs of what is evil. We have no ends to answer by such retorts as a hasty temper might cause an injured party to resort to. Let us the more cautiously guard against these, as they would, more than any thing else, hinder the success of every effort to convince our brethren of their fault in thus dealing with ourselves. The truths we hold are fast prevailing by their own light and power. God forbid we should employ other means than those which the spirit of our holy master warrants, to advance them.

As friends to Christian liberty we cannot but look with some distrust on those measures of other sects, which by their magnitude, their being so fitted together as parts of a plan, and their connexion with the exclusive spirit man-

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ifested toward Unitarians, seem like attempts to establish an ascendency which must endanger the rights of all besides, both civil and religious. No one can doubt that a party, in religion as in politics, may be led by a feeling of their own strength and great confidence in the goodness of their cause, to acts of usurpation. We are not alarmists, nor do we now impute to those who claim the title "evangelical" as their distinctive appellation, the blame of any projects which some zealots, over forward in their behalf, may have broached. But we would beg them to have a watchful eye upon their leaders, and to consider with the utmost prudence, the tendency of those schemes which, under the idea of evangelizing America and the World, they may be called upon to favor.

There is one encouragement of which we feel at liberty to avail ourselves, that we wish more particularly to avow. It may be well stated in these words, used by the Edinburgh Reviewer long since, when speaking concerning a very different matter. "Every numerous party, under the appearance of unanimity contains great diversities of sentiment; many of those, who, on the whole, prefer one side, are by no means prepared to plunge into the excesses of the noisiest and most conspicuous leaders; and in process of time, great changes of opinion take place in the interior of every party before any open division is apparent among its members." It is our belief, and we speak not unawares, that a large number among the truly conscientious persons in the orthodox party, do not cordially approve the harsh and uncharitable measures adopted toward other christians. They are made sad and unhappy by the supposed necessity of rejecting all fellowship with them. They begin to be weary of the denun-

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ciatory strains which fall from the pulpit. They secretly long for something more conciliatory and gentle. Brought into contact with Unitarians in social life, their hearts insensibly soften towards them, because they are compelled to acknowledge that there is not among them that hatred to Christ and the gospel which have been laid to their charge. Some have intimates, relatives, associates endeared by a thousand ties too old to break, and they find it hard to think God will make "vessels of wrath" of those whom they cannot help loving. These and many other similar reasons we might offer as proofs, that we do not judge justly when we deem the orthodox in a body, the hearty abettors of all which their party may see fit to do. It is also a fact, that a perceptible variance in opinion on the essential points in dispute with other sects, exists among themselves. The Trinity is not the same as held at the south and as it flourishes at the north. The Atonement is an altered doctrine, even in different churches of the same district, and among learned teachers at the same school. Revivals of religion are no longer judged by a common standard; as the Convention at Lebanon may testify. There is indeed a great deal more unanimity in the exclusion of supposed heretics from communion, among those who agree in fellowship and covenant, than in doctrinal discussion. We shall hope, that at length, a candid hearing will be accorded to our plea for a union of affection and christian intercourse, without any more attempts to compel a union in creed, so unreal when it seems to exist. We shall hope that the changes within parties may lead to a breaking up of parties, so far, at least, as that all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity will embrace one another, and all who

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receive Christianity as God's best gift will agree to employ it together for man's highest improvement and happiness.

PROPER UNITY OF GOD.

THE term *one* is numerical and therefore definite. We say *one* man, *one* lion, *one* tree, and there is no mistake. Nobody understands us to mean more than an individual. Singleness and unity are inseparable. A combination of *two* and *one* is not *one*. We do not think of several united, but of an individual alone, when we use the term *one*.

It is solemnly affirmed in Scripture, "Jehovah our God is *one* Jehovah." By this we understand there is one Jehovah in distinction from many, and that Jehovah is one being, which being we call God. We give the term *one* its numerical value precisely in this as in other cases. And ought we not? Have we any warrant to say that the term here means *triple* or *triune?* We dare not alter the proposition by thus changing the meaning of terms. We abide by the letter. We believe one here as elsewhere is one and not many. In addressing Jehovah, the Psalmist exclaims "thou art God alone." In addressing the Father we say "thou alone art Jehovah." And are we not right? Is not the Father Jehovah? And is there more than one Jehovah? We have read in the writings of men the name Jehovah-Jesus—but not in the Bible.

If you affirm the Son is Jehovah; the Spirit is Jeho-

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vah; the Father is Jehovah; have you not affirmed thrice? And unless the Father, Son, and Spirit are convertible terms, have you not declared there are three Jehovahs, three self-existents? And if you proceed to say that these three are one Jehovah, do not you affirm three to be one?

Are we told that we do not know in what divine unity consists? We ask in reply, has not the Bible declared to us "Jehovah our God is *one* Jehovah?" Is not this proposition useless and unmeaning to us, if we cannot know what the term *one* implies in this connexion? Jesus repeated this proposition with no qualification to his disciples. He did not give any new explication to the term *one*, nor even hint that it was not to be taken in its common numerical value. We abide by that sense. We have knowledge enough respecting the divine unity to understand the proposition, that our God is *one* Jehovah. We need no more in this argument.

When our Lord repeated to his disciples and other Jews the passage we have cited, he knew how they would understand him. If, then, the term *one* was to be received in any new sense or with any qualifications, why did he not inform them? If he himself, who spoke to them, was Jehovah, would they or could they know it without being told? And if he had disclosed to the Jews this appalling fact, would they not have manifested something of that astonishment which such a disclosure *must* have awakened in their breasts? Would his enemies have needed to suborn false witnesses against him, if they had heard him announce himself to be Jehovah, which would have alone made him in their eyes worthy of death?

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It has been stated that the doctrine of the Trinity is taught simply as a *fact*, to be received or rejected according to evidence. "The scriptures," it is said, "reveal many things as facts which they do not undertake to explain." As an example, the declaration "God is a Spirit" is cited. Now we demand the similar declaration announcing the *fact* that God is a *triune* being. A fact is not a matter of mere inference from something which is said; it must be declared in so many words or be shown to be *necessarily* implied in something else which is stated as a fact. If the great teacher thought it not needless to declare the fact that God is a spirit, which reason itself might have vindicated with a sufficient clearness, was it not needful to declare a fact so entirely beyond our comprehension, as that God is a triune intelligence? We have never seen the scripture which even intimates that the Godhead is plural and yet individual. You may cite a text respecting Christ's dignity, but that announces only what respects Christ. It declares no fact concerning God. Even if you could, as you cannot, find a text affirming "Christ is God," this would only prove Christ and God to be convertible terms, and would not prove that God or Christ exist in a Trinity. Separate passages of any kind respecting the Father, and respecting the Spirit, and respecting Christ, prove nothing as to the *fact* of a Trinity. Establish first the fact that the divine nature is plural or triple. Else the most you can prove is that the *one* God is sometimes *spoken of* under one name and sometimes under another, but in his nature remaining without distinction or division. We do not however admit that the scriptures give testimony even to thus much of the doctrine.

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Suppose (what is not the case) that the divine attributes were all ascribed in scripture both to the Father and to Christ. What is the proper inference from such a fact? That *in* the one divine nature there are two? Or that there are two, each of whom has the divine nature separately? That there are two, each of whom having the divine nature separately, is by himself——a God? It argues nothing, to reply, the Bible teaches us also, that there is but *one* God; unless it has assured us that *in* the one God, *in* the one only divine nature, there are *two*, each of whom has the divine perfections, and that these two are yet not divided or divisible.

The Trinity teaches that divine attributes are to be "*distinctly*" ascribed to three. Distinctly is "apart," "singly," "separately." And in asserting that there are three Gods, what do we more than ascribe the divine attributes distinctly, separately to three?—If you believe in three Eternals do you believe only in one Eternal? Believing in three Eternals, do you not believe in three Gods. Believing that there are three who have each a divine nature by himself or distinctly from the rest, do you not believe that there are three divine natures? And where there are three divine natures, are there not three divine beings—three Gods? We know nothing of Deity but the divine attributes—and where these are, there is Deity; and when we affirm there are three Deities, we only affirm there are three who have divine attributes. The Trinity affirms no less. It only adds, these three, which are each a Deity by himself, are together but one God.

If the three who possess divine attributes be distinct, are they not different? If different, they are not the

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same. Of the one you cannot affirm all which you can affirm of the other, else are they the same. But if the Father, Son, and Spirit be one and the same God, then whatever can be affirmed of God may be affirmed of either. Then we might use either name indifferently where the name God occurs. Let us try. "God raised up his Son Jesus, and hath sent him to bless you." "The Spirit raised up his Son Jesus." "The Son raised up his Son Jesus." So also wherever the term "the Son," occurs, referring to Christ, we may substitute the name God. "Of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither—God." To what would this lead us? But if "the Son" be God, his name is God, and these two appellations must be equivalent, and "interchangeable." A late writer on the Trinity, Mr Cornelius, actually draws an argument from what he conceives to be the fact, that "the words *Christ* and *God*, are used interchangeably in many instances." If Christ were God, these words might not only be used for one another in many but in all instances. Who would dare to make this substitution now?

The simple unity of God is proved by the circumstance that in scripture the pronouns I, thou, he, are applied to him precisely as to an individual human being. We are never taught to affix a plural meaning to these pronouns when God is spoken of. But if God exists as *three*, the plural, and not the singular, is the proper number both in the pronouns and the verbs which follow the names of God, or which follow the names Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Instead of reading "Jehovah *he* is God," "O *thou* that hearest prayer," we ought to read "Jehovah they are God," "O ye that hear prayer." It is worthy

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of remark that although Trinitarians believe Christ an object of religious worship, and the Spirit also, as well as the Father, yet so impressed are they with the idea of the singleness of him who heareth prayer, that they seldom if ever address the three together, in one and the same sentence. In the language of prayer they are almost always Unitarian.

We are sometimes told that God is three in *one* sense, and one in *another* sense. Are not three and one both terms of number, and is there any example in the whole compass of language where *three* has any other sense than that of its numerical value, or one any sense but that of unity, when these terms are properly used? But if three has in the Trinity a sense peculiar and different from what it has properly, what is that sense? God is three. Three what? Does three exceed one in this application of the term? If it means more than one—we again ask more what? To one divine nature you can add nothing, it includes all possible perfection. What more then do we include in our conception of God, when we say, God is three, than we do when we say God is one? The truth is, the proposition—God is three—cannot be conceived of by us without an idea of division, separation into parts. We can attach no meaning to the terms unless we conceive of three parts combined, making one whole —which whole God is.

This idea of partition in the Godhead cannot be disjoined from the notion of a "distinction" in the divine nature, regard it as you may. Thus, the creation is made by Trinitarians the special work of the Son in distinction from the Father and Spirit. Here then we have a great work done by God, and yet not done by the

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Father who is God, nor by the Spirit who is also God. To come at any notion of the true agent in creation we must *exclude* the Father and Spirit from the mind while thinking of it. Now does not such exclusion imply a division into parts? Can we in any other way acquire an idea of the distinction intended than by thinking of two parts as at rest, and away from the other while the work is performing?

Again, the scriptures affirm that the Father gave the Spirit to the Son without measure. If the Son be God, can we help conceiving of this under the idea of one part of the Godhead giving, another part given, and the third part receiving. Is not this at least natural? The human mind must be essentially altered, or this sort of confusion is inevitable in all our attempts to apprehend the doctrine of a distinction in the divine nature. A distribution of offices and division of works necessarily implies that there are *several* sharers; in other words, implies an entire distinction of being. We cannot escape this in assigning various operations to the Trinity, any more than we could when we were looking at different kinds of labor doing by human hands, help believing that the agents at work were different men.

Not only is this partition in the Deity inseparable from the doctrine of the distinction in the divine nature asserted by Trinitarians, but also an inequality among the parts. For the several offices ascribed to each are performed as matter of obedience to one of the three—the Father. In their official character there is a subordination of the Son and Spirit to him. And since they are known to us in distinction from the Father, only by their offices, by works performed in obedience to him, we can never

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conceive them to be his equals, though we may call them such. Some have talked of this "distinction" as consisting solely of a difference "in the order of operation." Which means, we suppose, that all operate together or equally, but one first, and another following him. But he who is first, has still the superiority in our thoughts.

This division into parts, and inferiority among themselves, may be seen most clearly if we take the Trinitarian doctrine respecting the Son's death for sinners. If the Father was not another being from the Son when the latter was suffering death, we have left us the shocking alternative of one part of God dying, and another remaining in life; which severs the divine nature indeed—were it possible.

But we quit this theme now with the design to resume it in some future number, when speaking of the proper unity of Jesus Christ.

Let us bear in mind on this important subject the *fact* on which Unitarians found their doctrine concerning it. There *is* in the Bible a solemn, express declaration, that "our God is *one*." There is *no* declaration there, that our God is *three* in any sense whatsoever. We abide by what is declared, and cannot give it up for propositions which have never yet been enunciated in the words of scripture, and which never will be, or can be.

THOUGHTS ON DIVINE SOVEREIGNTY.

That God is a Sovereign unlimited and absolute in dominion, and irresponsible to any other being, is a

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truth involved in the very affirmation of his existence and perfection. He cannot be otherwise. But one sometimes hears this truth alleged by way of apology for some supposed acts of God, which so strongly militate with our natural sentiments of right and wrong, as hardly to be reconciled even to the minds of those who attempt to vindicate them. The most appalling and distressing views of human destiny are derived from some vague notions about divine sovereignty. And unanswerable objections to several popular doctrines are often repelled without an answer by referring to this truth.

Now what are we taught by both reason and scripture on this point? In other words, what is the proper way of regarding the acknowledged fact of God's absolute, unlimited, irresponsible dominion?

We have chiefly to remember, if we respect revelation or reason on this subject, that the Divine Sovereignty is not a bare occupancy of the highest possible elevation, not simply reigning, though with exclusive, uncontrolled sway. It is the supremacy of perfect justice, unmixed benevolence, and a wisdom which can never err. All false doctrine on this point begins in narrowing the truth, making up a notion of sovereignty out of mere power, to the neglect of those moral qualities which in God, as in his creatures, direct, restrain, and render beneficent, that which else might indeed fill the universe with terror.

God *can* do whatsoever he pleases. But let us never forget who *He* is,—nor from a vain desire to glorify his omnipotence, ascribe to this unrivalled Sovereign acts which derogate infinitely more from his perfection than any want of power, (were it possible that he should want power,) could God is indeed responsible to no other

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being. He has no superior, and is exposed to no penalties. Absolute and without control, in the utmost sense we can imagine, from all without, this Great Being is yet a Law unto himself. He is good, and just, and wise, and these glorious attributes regulate every act of his power, and hold that power in as perfect control, as the elements of nature, and the steps of feeble man. We dishonor God when we think to exalt his supremacy by ascribing to his will any effects, which equity and goodness would not sanction.

All will agree that when we affirm that God can do whatsoever he pleases, we mean whatsoever is itself possible. Now there are other qualifications of this affirmation just as clear, and important to be made. The divine sovereignty does not consist in doing all his pleasure because it *is* his pleasure, and for no other reason. In our ideas of a thorough despot we always include this, of doing what he pleases because he pleases. And men never fail to condemn such a course. It would make any government on earth hateful to the subjects. Let us not then suppose in God what would disparage a mortal ruler, and render his dominion odious. He never does any thing merely because it is his pleasure, without any other reason. He is never arbitrary nor capricious. He has a motive besides his own mere pleasure in all the acts of his government. They do not vindicate but dishonor the ways of God to man, who attempt to excuse what they cannot but think apparently unjust, by saying God is a sovereign, he can do what he pleases, as he pleases and when he pleases. It is an *insult* to go further, and take refuge in mystery, when the supposed acts in the government of God, implied in certain doctrines, are

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plainly and palpably arbitrary and cruel. This is to say that God can not only do wrong, but is fain to hide what he does from the creature whom he has made too upright to approve it. As God has always a reason for what he does besides his own pleasure, so that reason is always worthy of a wise, merciful, holy, and just sovereign. It is always a good reason, one which all good beings could not but approve, if they knew it; one which all created minds must acknowledge to be right.

And here it is very important to notice an evasion too common, but most unwise and even impious, if we regard the tendency alone, though undoubtedly not meant to be so, by those who make it. It is said that finite beings cannot know what would be wrong or cruel in God, because they cannot comprehend his perfections. And hence it is that such bad things are openly attributed to God as his acts, while all the time he is declared to be perfectly good. We reply, as it has often been answered before, that we *can* know what would be wrong and cruel in God. Else it is absurd to speak of God's moral perfections at all. For if we cannot know whereof we affirm when we say, such and such things would be cruel in the Sovereign and Protector of the world, we cannot know whereof we affirm when we say the Judge of the whole earth will do right. How can we say what he *will* do, if we are ignorant what he cannot do? Why does the Bible take the pains to declare to us, "the Lord is righteous," since we are no judges of the meaning of the term when thus applied? The fact that such declarations are made and even abound in scripture, proves that we *can* know what they imply and what would be implied in their opposites. We render a mere lip service to

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Heaven, if our powers do not extend to this knowledge. We are called upon in vain, to "acquaint ourselves with God," unless we can ascertain what qualities belong to his acts, and what acts would imply the opposite qualities.

The truth is, we cannot indeed say, what the divine love and wisdom may prompt in *all cases*, because our minds cannot reach so far as to comprehend all the bearings and tendencies of particular things, nor all that which a wise and good being may consistently do in view of the whole case to be provided for. But we are competent to perceive that particular things, which we could not in reason and conscience approve if imitated on earth, *cannot* be among the decrees of God. We can affirm in some instances without hesitation, that God will not, and could not do so; while we may not know all which he may or will do in all cases whatsoever. For example, the doctrine of Election and Reprobation, which teaches that God out of his own mere pleasure, and without respect to any thing done by them, had decreed before the world was made, that a certain number of mankind should be holy and happy, and the rest wicked and miserable, to all eternity; this doctrine we *can* say at once, is false, and unworthy of God. It is cruel and unjust to the last degree. Any imitation of it possible among men, such as a parent determining before his children are born, that he will provide only for a part of them, and cast the remainder out from his abode, that they may perish, would call forth universal abhorrence.

A milder but not less pertinent example may be found in the following words of an able theologian,* in a recent

*Rev. Dr Spring.

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work. "I learn from the scripture that the manifestation of his own intrinsic excellence is the ultimate end of all that he [God] does." Now we understand this to mean that God seeks the admiration of his creatures merely, for its own sake, as the end most important, the ultimate crowning object of his government. Such a view of the moral governor's conduct we deem, at once, derogatory. Imperfect as we are, we can see an end higher, nobler, more worthy of God than this barren display, even the diffusion of unbounded happiness. And *that* we pronounce the ultimate end of all he does, as we discover it in the declarations and facts recorded in scripture, as well as from reason and analogy.

It will be granted that God is in himself happy beyond the possibility of any addition to his felicity. His perfections would make him happy, were they not known nor admired by a single intelligence in the universe. He has not, like weak monarchs on earthly thrones, a thirst for applause, a pride and vanity which must be gratified by showing his greatness to admiring hosts, ere that greatness can become the source of joy to himself. The praises which resound from millions of millions in happy devotion, above and below, are only grateful to God as evidences that they *are* good and happy. "He is not worshipped as needing any thing." Apart from the diffusion of happiness, we cannot conceive how God can take pleasure in manifesting to imperfect beings his own ineffable glory, so far transcending their highest thoughts, that "he chargeth even his angels with folly." His power is secure without such manifestation. His nature and character cannot be changed. His decrees might go forth to unresisted execution though none but himself

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knew whence they proceeded. In judging a human character by the Gospel rules and spirit, we condemn all display as impairing the excellence it seeks to have seen and admired. Jesus, both in his own retiring goodness, and his uniform precepts, discourages such a display as unworthy the purely devout and benevolent mind. His lovely virtues seem never to have been set forth with the least regard to any other end than their being imitated by his followers, imitated as a means of their own eternal felicity. "Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly, and ye shall find rest to your souls." And the Christian spirit is throughout a rebuke to all ostentation. Now it is declared in scripture that "God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined into our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of his glory in the face of Jesus Christ." From the character which shone pre-eminent in Jesus we derive our purest patterns of what is excellent in the divine moral glory. All our ideas of God's moral perfections must be made up of what we learn from such patterns, extended infinitely. Hence what is most approved in created excellence must be regarded as an image of similar excellence in God, and cannot be opposite to what God approves. We are sure then that the mere display of his own intrinsic glory is *not* his ultimate end in all he does;—but that his perfections are manifested for the good of his moral subjects; that they may not only pay the tribute of barren admiration, but love, imitate, and thus attain that felicity which their Creator designs as the ultimate object in his government of the universe.

In their attempts to vindicate the decree which consigned to reprobation millions of our race before their

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birth, many writers have drawn an argument from the idea that to display his own intrinsic excellence is the ultimate end which God has respect to in all he does. As the Elect are saved purely as the trophies which adorn the triumphs of sovereign grace, so the Reprobate serve the purpose of glorifying the vindictive justice of God. As if divine love, unlike human benevolence, sought not first the good of its object, and was not disinterested; but rescued suffering souls from perdition, that his own glory might thereby be made more conspicuous, rather than from any pity he had for them. And yet worse, as if God could not be glorified, except through the medium of sin and its punishment; could not be seen to be just without he was vindictive. Alas for us! we could have no hope for the world, if such were the only justice in the divine character. But the whole Bible forbids the thought. It was love which sent a Saviour. While we were yet sinners, God pitied, Ghrist died for us. Was the Prodigal's father intent mainly on his own reputation for kindness, when he fell on the neck of his lost son? Yet this was Jesus' picture of divine forgiveness. All his representations accord with this beautiful parable. It is impossible to conceive a more disinterested affection than the divine goodness. The moment we make the salvation God has provided for us, to be the fruit of his concern for his own personal reputation, rather than his desire to impart felicity, disinterestedness is flown. And if that excellent property is impaired in the redemption, what must it be in the reprobation, by an antecedent decree of wretched millions not yet born, for the sake of "getting glory" to himself through their sin and wo? Do we recognise here one feature which

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distinguishes that love we behold in creation, feel in our own hearts, and admire in Jesus' face?

This is not the place to discuss the doctrine of punishment,—but we may say that except it be his desire to preserve the happiness of his moral kingdom unimpaired, we cannot find a motive which is adequate to account for the wo visited upon the impenitent. God has nothing to fear from the puny rebel, as he has nothing to hope from the most excellent saint. His throne rests on an immoveable basis, and the stormy passions which shake the earth cannot disturb it. The worship and obedience rendered by the pure and good is not to be increased by the spectacle of agonizing victims, nor could be diminished by their rescue from perdition. What interest has Heaven to serve by punishment, save only the promotion of goodness and thus of happiness among the creatures of God?

The Lord reigneth, let the earth rejoice! Such is the proper application of the glorious truth we have been considering. God's sovereignty is not a cause for gloomy apprehensions; it inspires hope, not despair. To know that our feeble life is encompassed by the omnipotent giver of it, and all our ways directed by a hand that cannot be resisted, and an eye that looks to the end and is never closed in darkness, ought to awaken a delightful confidence, and fill the heart with praise. Our hopes may be blasted, our labors fail, our spirits sink, and we may see nothing good in prospect for ourselves or mankind. But the counsel of the Lord shall stand, and all his pleasure be fulfilled. Truth and righteousness have a friend in the Heavens who can and will secure their triumph. Happiness too, even the weal of the meanest dependent, is God's constant care. Whom he designs to

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bless, the Heavens and the Earth, all nature and all intelligences must unite to render happy. Though the floods lift up their waves, and the stormy winds rage, and every element break upon the slender bark which bears us onward, the helm is in the hands of one mightier than all, and by him we shall be carried safely to the haven we desire.

WHITSUNDAY.

SPIRIT of Truth! on this thy day
  To Thee for help we cry,
To guide us through the dreary way
  Of dark mortality!

We ask not, Lord! thy cloven flame,
  Or tongues of various tone;
But long thy praises to proclaim
  With fervor in our own.

We mourn not that prophetic skill
  Is found on earth no more;
Enough for us to trace thy will
  In Scripture's sacred lore.

We neither have nor seek the power
  Ill demons to control;
But Thou, in dark temptation's hour,
  Shalt chase them from the soul.

No heavenly harpings sooth our ear,
  No mystic dreams we share;
Yet hope to feel Thy comfort near,
  And bless Thee in our prayer.

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When tongues shall cease, and power decay,
And knowledge empty prove,
Do Thou thy trembling servants stay,
With Faith, with Hope, with Love!

PRACTICAL QUESTIONS ON COMMON FAULTS.

We all are chargeable more or less with faults which arise from our self-ignorance, our self-partiality, and our self-deception. Unless discovered and corrected, they may produce many compunctions of conscience, greatly diminish our usefulness, and bring much reproach on our christian character.

It is necessary very frequently to institute an inquiry into the state of our characters, if we would understand our errors. To this end the following plain questions are offered to those who are disposed to make the best use of any aid in the hard work of self-cultivation.

In regard to our personal duties, have we faithfully improved our privileges for mental, and moral, and religious instruction? Have not our appetites and passions frequently triumphed over the voice of reason and conscience? Have we not wasted much precious time; abused many opportunities for improvement, and greatly neglected the proper cultivation of our talents? Have not our thoughts been often vain and sinful? Have not our actions been too much influenced by selfish and worldly considerations? Have not our affections been too exclusively given to the world; to its vanities, and pleasures, and honors? Have not the moments been few, comparatively few, which we have devoted to the all

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important concerns of our souls; to the acquisition of the graces and virtues of christianity? And for the want of proper self-cultivation and self-discipline, have not the rank weeds of worldly-mindedness sprung up in our hearts, and spread their poisoning influence over our whole character?

In regard to our social duties, have we loved our fellow men as ourselves? Have we not often cherished ill will and revengeful feelings towards those who have disappointed our expectations, crossed our wishes, or opposed our interests? Have we not sometimes suffered ignorant prejudice and party feeling to alienate our good will from those who were not on our side; and cause us to throw out designing hints, injurious suspicions, base insinuations, or unfounded charges respecting their motives, or principles, or conduct? Have we faithfully exerted our influence in checking the progress of wickedness and infidelity, and in promoting pure morality and practical religion? Have we habitually ministered of our substance, or our sympathy, or our good counsels, to the poor and wretched, the sick and afflicted, the ignorant and erring? In numberless instances, have we not thought things, and said things, and done things, which we should not wish others to think and say and do, were their case our own?

In regard to our religious duties, have we faithfully studied the sacred scriptures, and sincerely endeavored to make them the standard of our faith and practice? Has not our faith in Jesus been too weak and inoperative? Has our gratitude for his unmerited favors, and our love for his sublime and exalted character, been

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properly cherished by a frequent perusal of his whole history, and an earnest contemplation of his heavenly virtues? When we have endeavored to worship the Father in spirit and truth, have not our thoughts wandered from the great object of prayer; and our affections been cold and languid; and unhallowed motives, and selfish desires, and unchristian wishes mingled in our petitions? And instead of loving our God with our whole heart, have we not been forgetful of his presence and blessings, and disobedient to his holy will?

The faults now hinted at are probably known in a greater or less degree to every one who knows his own heart, and is striving to cultivate and exhibit the virtues of the christian character. Our knowledge of them should make us humble, charitable, and watchful.

It should make us humble. If we truly know ourselves, we shall not be elated with spiritual pride. We shall never boast of our merits either for believing much, or doing much, or receiving much. We shall never say to our fellow sinner, either in words or actions,—stand by thyself, we are holier than thou. No. We shall the rather say—God be merciful to us sinners. We shall from the heart freely forgive all who trespass against us, as we hope for divine forgiveness. We shall look upon all mankind as brethren, children of the same parent, and equally dear to their common Father. On religious subjects, sensible of the difficulty of arriving at truth on all points; knowing how much our opinions are liable to be influenced by our feelings, our prejudices, our early associations, and our interests; conscious of our liability to err on all topics, especially on those which are incapable of perfect comprehension by finite minds, we shall

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ever assume the tone of humble diffidence rather than positiveness; and ever keep our judgments open for the admission of further evidence and more light, frankly confessing as well as really feeling, that we *may* be in error as well as others.

This knowledge of our faults should also make us charitable. Knowing our own failings, we shall feel disposed to make proper allowances for the failings of others. The less censorious shall we be, the more we know of our own heart. Instead of devoting our time and attention to the discovery and publication of our neighbor's faults, we shall find sufficient employment in discovering and correcting our own. Instead of condemning those who do not embrace our peculiar views of religion, we shall remember, that different minds are differently constituted, and differently educated, and differently affected by the same evidence; and under the influence of different impressions, and associations, and interests, and prejudices, and passions; and consequently may naturally and *innocently* arrive at different conclusions on the same subject. We shall recollect that others differ no more from us than we do from them; and that it is as impossible for others to alter their belief without further evidence, if their belief rests on evidence, as for us to alter ours. While we wish others to believe us sincere in our opinions, we shall cheerfully give them the same credit. And instead of denouncing any as heretics, or infidels, or enthusiasts, for a mere difference in religious sentiment, we shall cheerfully embrace in the arms of our charity, all who bring forth the fruits of righteousness.

This knowledge of our faults should likewise make us watchful. Temptations beset us on every side. We

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have foes within, and foes without. And nothing but constant vigilance and unwearied exertion can vanquish our spiritual enemies, and secure our progress in religion. We should search fearlessly into the deep recesses of our souls, and bring to light the hidden things of darkness. We should often compare our whole characters with the requisitions of the gospel, determined to know ourselves, the worst of ourselves, that we may apply the proper remedies to all our moral maladies. We should labor, by habitual practice, to make all the duties of religion a pleasure, and often let the pure incense of devotion ascend from the consecrated altars of our hearts. If, therefore, our knowledge of ourselves makes us more humble, more charitable, and more watchful, then will our faults be likely to be in a good degree corrected, and our character essentially improved. To that Good Being who has promised his holy spirit for the guidance and purification of his erring and sinful children let us pray without ceasing, "Cleanse thou me from secret faults, keep back thy servants also from presumptuous sins."

B. W.

THE STING OF DEATH.

Religion is the one thing needful to sustain the soul in the closing scene of earthly existence. We connect so many gloomy associations with the idea of death;—the wasting sickness; the watchings and tears of anxious friends; the distressing hour of separation; the ghastly corpse; the sable habiliments of mourning; the slow moving hearse; the dismal tolling of the bell; and the

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last agonizing look, ere the object of affection is consigned to its kindred dust,—as to render the subject peculiarly unwelcome to our minds. And when any circumstance forces our attention to the period of our own dissolution, we utter the hasty prayer—O let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his; and then we banish the chilling thought.

But is death itself so much to be feared? When I have seen the tender infant, sickening in its mother's arms, opening its entreating eyes and raising its little hands for comfort, then drooping like a new mown flower, and without a struggle sinking into the sleep of death, with an angelic smile on its countenance, I have asked—Is this death? It is; but it has no terrors here. And when I have stood beside the dying minister of Christ, whose head was white with the snows of more than eighty winters; and heard him pour forth fervent gratitude for the manifold blessings of his long life, and joyfully call upon his heavenly Father to receive his departing spirit; and watched the last flickerings of the lamp of life before it was extinguished, I have asked—Is this death? It is; but there are no terrors to me here. I have not yet discovered where lies the sting of death. When I have seen one in the strength of manhood, who had lived as he listed, and sneered at the realities of religion, suddenly prostrated on a bed of extreme suffering; and while the fatal disease was fast preying on his earthly frame, heard him calling for the consolations of the Gospel, because conscience, an awakened, accusing conscience, had kindled a hell in his soul ten times hotter than his burning, tormenting fever; and after much bodily and mental anguish, ob-

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served the contortions of agony which death had left on his features, I have asked—Is this death? It is indeed death. And it is death in all its terrors. I know now what the *sting* of *death* is.

Let a man lead a wicked, impenitent life, and when brought upon the bed of death, if reason keeps her seat, and conscience is faithful in her duty, his last hours may well inspire us with dread. The hell in his own soul, he cannot quench with all the reasonings of sophistry and infidelity. The consciousness of past wickedness, the torment of present sins, and the fear of an hereafter, will be his bosom companions. And it will not be in the power of any creed, christian or infidel, to relieve his mental agony. No. It is religion alone; the recollection of a well spent life; the possession of christian virtues; a well grounded hope of future felicity; and an unwavering confidence in the infinite Father; it is these, and nothing but these, that can smooth the pillow of death and destroy its sting. But with these; with the innocence and purity of childhood; with the character of goodness and piety, death itself is not to be feared. Its bodily pangs, even when most excruciating, can be of but short duration. Its appalling associations can be banished by the force of reason and reflection; its terrors can be dissipated by the cheering light of the Gospel; and it becomes the door of admission to regions of glory and eternal blessedness. If then, we would have support, when called to walk through the dark valley of the shadow of death, we must prepare for it now. We must make religion our friend. We must live soberly and righteously and godly in the present world. And when our earthly pilgrimage closes, no matter how few

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or how many seasons have rolled over our heads, we shall be enabled to meet the summons of death with a smile. With triumphant hope, we may exclaim—I have fought a good fight; I have kept the faith; I have finished my course; I am hastening to the bosom of my God. O grave, where is thy victory; O death, where is thy sting! B. W.

EXPLANATION OF SCRIPTURE.

For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, *if they shall fall away*, to renew them again to repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.—HEBREWS vi. 4, 5, 6.

THERE is one material error in this translation. The clause, "if they shall fall away," should be rendered, "and have fallen away." In the original, the word is *kai*, which is never rendered *if*, but most generally *and*. The participle also is in the past tense, and not in the future, as it now reads in our Testament. Consequently the correct translation must be—*and have fallen away*.

The unlearned reader need not depend on my authority alone. The following remarks are from the honest, learned, orthodox Dr Macknight, who has published a valuable translation of the apostolic Epistles. "The participle, *perapesontas*, being in the past tense, ought to have been translated, 'have fallen away.' Nevertheless, our translators, following Beza, who, without *any* authority, has inserted in his version the word *if*, have rendered

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this sentence, if they shall fall away, that this text might not contradict the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints. But as no translator should take upon him to add to, or alter the scripture for the sake of any favorite doctrine, I have translated the clause, *and have fallen away.*" This must be satisfactory to every candid mind.

In this passage, the writer is speaking of some apostates from christianity. When Jesus Christ was on earth, many of the Jews attended upon his ministry; they were enlightened by his preaching; they tasted of the heavenly gift, the christian religion; they were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, in acquiring a christian temper; they tasted the good word of God, in his fulfilment of his promise of a Saviour; and the powers of the world to come, in the miracles wrought in confirmation of his Messiahship. But the first disciples were soon persecuted. And some of those, who had been blessed with the Saviour's instructions, renounced their allegiance; they separated from his professed followers; they returned to Judaism; and they crucified the Son of God afresh, by uniting with his murderers, and maintaining, with them, that he was a malefactor, and had been justly crucified. Their apostacy is mentioned to incite the Hebrews to perseverance in their christian profession; and stimulate to greater exertions for religious goodness. And the impossibility of reclaiming such backsliders, is urged as a powerful motive to constancy. When we speak of the impossibility of reforming a confirmed drunkard, we mean to express only an extreme degree of improbability. And so here.

In this sense, it was not to be expected, that those who had publicly renounced their religious faith, dispo-

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sitions, privileges, and hopes, and blasphemed the author of the blessed gospel, would be renewed to repentance, the first step in their return to christianity.

Thus we obtain the true meaning of this difficult passage. It refers to the early apostates, and not to any class of modern backsliders. It teaches us that the most favored christians have fallen from grace—from their christian faith and goodness; and in this sense, completely overthrows the whole calvinistic doctrine of the final perseverance of saints. "Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall."

INTEMPERANCE.

The first step toward arresting the progress of that scourge and reproach of our land, Intemperance, is to diffuse such information on the subject as shall cause the evil to be generally and justly understood; and shall awaken in all good men the serious purpose to withstand it. More anxiety could not but exist where there is so much reason for it, if the community were made acquainted with those appalling facts which every inquiry into the nature and extent of this moral pestilence, multiplies in our hands. It is not yet apprehended by all, that this destructive vice is daily nourished by the most innocent among us, under the forms of civility, and by a thousand practices which like these have no suspicious appearance, and are not in themselves criminal. We are glad to see the true doctrine now plainly set forth by the highest authorities, that the plague of

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excessive drinking is nourished by the moderate indulgences of the many, even more than by the unrestrained indulgences of the comparatively few. Alas! we say—the few—but the time is hastening when the many will be the lost ones—and—the few—will be the other side. If ten thousand a year die now by Intemperance, what can we hope for the future, unless some stop is soon put to its ravages?

We most earnestly recommend to our readers, the Discourses on Intemperance by Rev. John G. Palfrey, of this city, as calculated to give every rational mind a conviction which shall lead to instant and earnest resolutions and efforts to aid by all possible means, the attempts now made to check this terrible evil. The author has there stated very plainly, but very eloquently too, the solemn truths on this subject. By calculations which are any thing but exaggerated, by facts which no man can gainsay, he has proved to us the dangers which now press upon us on all sides, in consequence of the excessive use of ardent spirits. But it is vain to alarm people who will not act as their well-grounded fears prompt them to act. One, and the *surest* kind of remedy lies in the self-denial, the *trifling* self-denial, which would take from those not yet corrupted, the means by which they may become so. Let all consent to *do without* their gin and brandy and spirit, who now only use them moderately, and if we cannot hope to save those who are drunkards already, we may rescue others from sharing their guilt and their doom.

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SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

BENEFITS DERIVED FROM SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

It is gratifying to witness the interest felt at the present time in Sunday schools. And while we observe their gradual increase, the accessions of strength which they are constantly acquiring, and the happy influence which they are exercising, it is a matter of no small gratulation that the objections and prejudices against them are equally subsiding, and that they now begin to be more fully known, and to receive the valuable aid of those, who have been heretofore doubtful with regard to their utility.

Much as these institutions have accomplished, there are yet many improvements to be made in them. Among which are a more perfect knowledge of their object and design,—the manner of imparting instruction—together with the benefits to be expected from them. These remarks will apply, we are inclined to believe, as well to those who *are*, as to those who *are not* engaged in them; and in witnessing the improvements already made, we are encouraged to hope, that a little more experience will enable us to accomplish all we desire.

We apprehend that the utility of these schools is but partially understood, and is too easily lost sight of by the teachers themselves. The constant and arduous exertions, that are required of the teachers, and the trials of their patience are well known. Constituted as we are, it is necessary at times, that we should be encouraged by

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something more than the slow advancement which we may witness in the subjects of these labors. Happily for those who are devoted to this good cause, there are many other sources of encouragement. Their kind and disinterested labors awaken the purest pleasure in the benevolent hearts whence they emanate, and thus reward their efforts even at the moment they are made. And their influence, extending as we trust to the parents of the children under their care, affects the community at large, and they are thus again rewarded. It would be interesting to trace the benefits derived from these institutions in all their various branches, and point out the encouragements which such a view affords. But to do this we should not only have to take a very extensive view of the subject, but to enter into an elaborate discussion, which is far from our design, which is only to speak of a few of their beneficial results on those most nearly concerned in them.

In exhibiting the usefulness of these institutions we must not confine ourselves simply to the committing of scripture to memory, and the religious instruction given the children, as is often done. Far more than this, experience has proved to be their fruits. When we see parents look to the Sunday school teacher as their true friend and adviser—when we see them unbosom to the teacher all their troubles and wants, their joys and griefs, relating to their children; when we see them meet the instructers with all the affection of long known friends, and feel a desire to profit by the advice which is given them; when we see children look to their teachers with an affection almost equal to that for their parents, and hail them with pleasure, and welcome them to their

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homes, while their cheerful bright countenances tell us they are truly happy with them—when we see the interest with which they listen to the instruction of their teacher at school, and when they have done wrong, witness the emotions of the heart by the tear of penitence, we then must acknowledge that the effects of Sunday schools are not to be measured by the bare amount of knowledge gained in them. From such considerations as these may be derived that encouragement, which does not always arise from the slow progress made in the business of instruction itself.

The exertions of those, who sacrifice pleasure and comfort to impart good to their fellow-men, always deserve our admiration. How much we respect the laborious missionary. We meet him perhaps passing a dark alley into some gloomy hovel, where few would imagine a human being could live, giving temporal and spiritual relief to its wretched inmates. He has gone to kindle hope in the sufferer's heart by the belief that there is one who feels for them, and will aid and assist them. They thought the world comfortless and dreary before this voice of sympathy was heard within their dwelling. We follow him to another sad abode,—perhaps a dying mother is there waiting to receive him with calmness and resignation. We find the children guided by him with parental affection in the path of duty. We follow him again and find him among confusion and disorder, disobedience and vice, which it is his holy endeavor to restrain and correct. We observe him in all these situations; in each, he is looked up to with gratitude, and his toils are crowned with a rich blessing. We think of the happiness he must enjoy in reflecting on a course so truly

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christian. We trace him to his retirement, and find him tasting that holy peace and joy, which the pleasures of the world can never bestow. We regard him with admiration and love, and almost envy his felicity. But not inferior to him is the Sunday school teacher. Have we not seen him too, when the duties of his office were suspended, devoted to similar labors of love;—following his pupils to their homes, often to the sad abodes of severe poverty, sickness, and mourning, and exemplifying his own instructions by the most winning virtues, while he became the instrument of divine consolation to others. Have we not known him cheerfully sacrifice his time and strength in the cause of human improvement, and by a most salutary influence, become the efficient helper of the poor, and ignorant and desolate? Have we not seen all this? Oh yes! and we have thought of the happiness he must derive not only from the consciousness of his endeavors to do good, but from the reward his exertions meet in his success. This however is but part of his happiness. We will dare to hope that these feeble efforts will meet a higher reward, the approbation not only of men but of God. We will look beyond this state of existence, when all these exertions will be fully known, and receive their due reward. The apparently discouraging parts of his duty will then be made manifest, and the improvement in his life which he may not have traced to any particular cause, may then appear to have been sought for and found, within the walls of a Sunday school.

Where is the teacher that has not experienced moments when he was forcibly impressed with the necessity of learning himself, before he could instruct those under his care? who has not found a careful investigation

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necessary in order faithfully to perform his duty; an investigation, which perhaps would never have been attempted had he not been called on to perform this pleasant and interesting task? Who is the teacher that has endeavored to instil religious instruction into the minds of the young, that has not been convinced that in order to produce the desired effect on others, he must exemplify the powers of religion in his own life? Who is the teacher, that has been long in the Sunday school, that has not seen qualities in others to attract his esteem which were of intrinsic and permanent value, and might be to himself at once a source of the purest satisfaction, and an incentive to the highest improvement? What aid has he not found this in his purposes of benevolence; what assistance to his frail virtue; with what increased fortitude has not this communion with those with whom he was associated in this delightful task, enabled him to return into the world and encounter the trials of his lot?

We often speak in considering this subject only of the nearest and most obvious results. But there are results equally important, which we can neither calculate nor witness. Who can tell the effect of the lessons given the child on the mind of others to whom he stands related? Who can tell how many impressions are thus transmitted from mind to mind, producing the most important consequences through a long period of time? Who can tell that in the least promising subjects, an influence unnoticed at the time, may not revive in after life and be renewed in the mind; and when the season of passion and folly is past,—when the world and its vanities have satiated, but not satisfied that craving for happiness which is heaven's own stimulus to virtue; who

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can tell, that the advice given in childhood, the instruction of the Sunday schools, may not, like the remembrance of home to the prodigal son, inspire the same salutary remorse, and make some wanderer from God exclaim with him, "I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son, make me as one of thy hired servants."—We know the earthly father's answer: how much more shall our Heavenly Father do for those who love him. May this be the reward of those who are thus laudably engaged in these schools. At all events, they may be encouraged in their labors from the knowledge, that they will have prepared the ground for the reception of the good seed, and though it be not planted till the summer of their days, it will find a ready reception then, and yield a bountiful harvest before the winter of life overtakes them. G.

SUNDAY SCHOOL INSTRUCTION.

WHAT is the object of Sunday School Instruction, is a question which is too seldom put in the true spirit of inquiry. A serious and definite attention to this subject, would perhaps be attended with results equally important to parents and teachers. Among the former, too many regard Sunday schools only as part of a series of measures for making premature and injudicious impressions on the minds of children; while others are favorably disposed towards them, for no better reason than a vague impression, that they are *somehow* a means of doing good, or cherishing early piety; and it is not uncommon for teachers themselves to regard their own exertions in the Sunday school

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with no truer or more distinct perception of their value.

Were the question now alluded to more frequently and more attentively proposed, it would be a more easy matter to satisfy the doubts of those who are not fully persuaded of the usefulness of Sunday schools; and more natural and rational methods of instruction would probably be adopted, than in most cases have hitherto prevailed.

In attempting to follow the question with which we have set out, we shall draw our answers not only from the forms of religious instruction usually adopted in Sunday schools, but from what appears to be demanded by the nature of the case, though it may not yet have obtained a place in any school, and presents itself rather in the light of desirable improvement; our object being not so much to offer an apology for Sunday schools as to contribute something, if possible, to the assistance of those who teach them.

Definite ideas on the subject of our present inquiries, are peculiarly important. For if, as is sometimes supposed, the business of Sunday schools consists in joining in formal and unintelligible acts of devotion, or in saying by rote a chapter or a hymn, little benefit can be expected to result from them.

The true object of all religious education is, or ought to be, such a course of instruction and exercise as has the greatest tendency to enlighten and enlarge and elevate the mind—to interest and regulate the affections, to cherish good dispositions, and develope good habits by the permanent influence of religious principle. That Sunday schools contribute effectually and peculiarly to these excellent results, is evident to all who have had opportunity to observe schools of this kind taught on methods suggested by a benignant regard to the present happiness

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and improvement of the young. But where the early communication of religious impression is made to depend on the mere repetition of texts of scripture, or of answers from a catechism ; and where warm harangues or gloomy denunciations are the customary addresses of the teacher, —where the object is a violent excitement of emotion or a premature creation of character, children may be little benefited, notwithstanding all the zeal and labors of their instructers. The intellect may be left wandering among mysteries ; the heart may become the subject of a diseased and precocious action ; and imagination obtain the ascendency in the mind ; and extravagance become the habitual expression of outward deportment.

If, on the contrary, it is the teacher's endeavour to promote a natural developement of the soul—if he is content and willing to keep pace with the progress of the minds which he is guiding—if he has faith and patience sufficient to wait for the progress of "*bringing up*" the children of his charge in the "*nurture*" of truth, he will in all probability see them attain the stature and the vigor of "perfect men." To attain these results there must be a *gradual* diffusion of intellectual and spiritual light in the young mind : the rays of instruction must fall with a directness, a steadiness, and a constancy, sufficient to communicate the warmth and activity of a natural life. Occasional gleams of brightness cannot serve to guide a being formed for perpetual progress. The understanding must be made the great agent in religious thought : the memory must be made the home of noble ideas. It is in this way only that the heart can be early trained to beat to none but generous purposes, and the imagination be exclusively occupied by pure and happy forms. Principle will thus pre-

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side over the whole character; and habit will become a faithful and friendly guide.

If to attain these high objects is the endeavour of the Sunday school teacher, he will not consider the learning or the saying of a lesson by rote, as a means adequate to his purpose. He will make the understanding the chief aim of all his efforts. He will not consider his object accomplished, though the memory should be stored ever so copiously with words. He will perceive that his great point is to aid the young mind in perceiving truth and reflecting on it,—in expanding and applying it. His chief anxiety will be to aid his pupils in *thinking*,—to render them thoroughly intelligent in all their religious impressions. Neither will a judicious teacher, who has the great end of his labors duly before him, rest satisfied with permitting his class to come to school and join in the exercises, merely because it will probably produce a good impression on the minds of the children. All such aid, (if not strengthened from other sources) he knows to be transient, and inadequate to produce an intelligent habit of mind, and ultimately an enlightened self-direction. He will be solicitous, therefore, that by every possible exertion the children may fully understand the expressions which they take upon their lips, and feel the meaning in their hearts.

The excitement of the imagination becomes, when we consider the true object of religious instruction, a very questionable thing. If it produce fear in the susceptible minds of children, it is downright cruelty; hallow it by what names we may. If it raises but a glow of joy, it may be a happy momentary impulse, but can have no habitual power in the ordinary duties and feelings of life. It may indeed be prolonged into an ardent and romantic cast of thought; but it will lead to excesses of feeling and vio-

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lence of emotion, rather than to a constant serenity of soul, produced by the indwelling light of principle.

The great object, then, of Sunday school instruction, should be to implant religious knowledge early, but naturally, and gradually. Blind and violent impulse must be made to give place to the gentle and progressive ascendency of thought. The nature of the mind must be studied : its advancement must not be the result of force; and high as the ultimate aims of the Sunday school teacher are, he must be content with very humble beginnings, and with a very moderate progress. If after months of exertion, he succeeds in making his pupils more intelligently sensible to parental love, more diligent in filial and fraternal duties, or more disinterested in their affection to one another—because more conscious of the presence and the kindness of the universal Father—he has succeeded in accomplishing the true ends of instruction; and for all farther results he must wait patiently, relying much on the habitual action of the mind upon itself, as it becomes more fully conscious of its own nature.

A TEACHER.

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER'S REWARD.

IT is perhaps a necessity of our nature to be stimulated in all our undertakings by the prospect of reward. But it is wisely ordered by Providence, that though happiness may be derived from various sources, yet all is transient and fleeting in comparison with that arising from love to God, which, though it calls for sacrifices and exertion, still is the only source of perpetual serenity, uninterrupted cheerfulness, and a constant desire to *be* and to *do* good.

It is peculiarly gratifying to those who devote a large

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portion of their time to Sunday schools, to perceive the encouragements presented them in the performance of their duties. They not only have present visible influences in forming the youthful mind to knowledge and virtue, but they may indulge the hope that in many cases where there is apparently little improvement, the foundation is laid, and circumstances only are wanting to produce the most happy results.

I was led to these reflections by *two facts*, which came within my knowledge a short time since. A lad of about twelve years of age, who was an orphan and dependant on his aunt, a person in narrow circumstances, for support, was placed at the Sunday school in H— street. After remaining there some months, his aunt found it necessary to procure him employment as an apprentice, in order that he might aid her in obtaining a livelihood; at which time he left the school. While there, he had discovered little desire to learn, and was thought indifferent to the instruction given him. He had not been long in his new situation before he began to be troubled with frequent pain in his eyes. Silent and uncomplaining, however, he went day after day to his business, until gradually his sight failed and he became totally blind.

Such was the situation of his aunt, that it was often not in her power to do more, than give him his meals while in bed each day, and he was obliged to lie there sometimes many days together. Deprived of exercise at a time when he had been accustomed to a great deal, it may well be supposed he not only grew weak fast, but pined away. And this was not all; long confinement deprived him of the use of his limbs, and he was unable

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to sit up without assistance. It was an affecting sight to look at him on his sick bed, with a countenance beaming with cheerfulness—his eyes now gazing round and now apparently fixed on surrounding objects, and yet covered with an imperceptible veil which shut the light for ever from his view.

In this situation a lady living in the adjoining house, happened to hear of him, and went to see him. After conversing with him some time she inquired if he had ever attended a Sunday-school, to which he replied in the affirmative, and added that Mr B— was his teacher; and on being asked if he would like to see him he expressed great joy and was delighted with the idea. The teacher was soon informed of his situation, and went to see him. They conversed a long time together, and he related to him all that had passed since he had left the school. It was evident, that the instruction and advice of his teacher had not been forgotten by him, from the artless simplicity and pleasure with which he told what he remembered of it. And never shall I forget when the question was asked what he desired most, his meek and gentle reply—"that if God were willing he prayed that he might see again." The feelings of the teacher can better be imagined than described. It was not for him to look idly on and see him in this situation. Active exertions were necessary, and they were made; and soon his little heart began to beat with joy on being told, that he was going to a Hospital, where they hoped to cure him. And while one and another stood round his bed, he repeated this joyful news to them again and again, and said "he hoped soon to be there." His wishes were granted, and shortly, by the active exertions of his teacher,

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he was comfortably and pleasantly situated there. He received every medical assistance the institution afforded. An operation was soon performed, which was attended with but little pain. His friends were each day anxiously expecting to hear of his improvement and were not without hope, that he would soon be restored.

But day after day and week after week passed away, and he was no better, until at length the time elapsed for which he was to stay there—and sad to say, all hope and expectation were gone. But he did not murmur nor repine, when he returned to the home he had left with such sanguine hopes. Nor did his teacher forget him; he was frequently a witness of his resignation, and it endeared him to him more than ever. His aunt in the mean time finding all expectation of his recovering his sight at an end, and being unable to support him, wrote to a brother who resided in a neighboring town, and told him her situation and that of the lad: when he instantly requested that he might come to him. The teacher heard this, and while he hoped that it was for his good, and that he would find there a home where they could pay more attention to him, could not but regret parting with him, and faithfully improved the short time that was allowed them to be together; and his little heart, which beat so high with hope a short time before, though it had been severely tried, still melted with gratitude for the unremitted kindness of this faithful friend, who, when he was called to bid him farewell, could not but breathe in silence the prayer, "may he who tempers the wind to the shorn lamb and hears the ravens when they cry, protect this orphan boy!"

The reward to this teacher was not only the sweet

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satisfaction he enjoyed in reflecting that all which human power and skill could do to improve the condition of his pupil, had been done; but, he could not but think also, that the patience and resignation which he had witnessed in him during all his sufferings, might be traced to the instructions which he had received at the Sunday school.

The other circumstance which I would mention, occurred at the same school, and in the same class. A lad who had attended there for two or three years, on being about to leave the city with his parents, called on his teacher the day previous, to take his leave of him. After some conversation together, in which the teacher recalled to the mind of his pupil the instruction and advice he had received, and they were about to separate, the lad slowly extended his youthful hand as if with a wish to press his teacher's before leaving him, which was perceived and the feeling of affection quickly reciprocated; and while thus hand in hand, he distinctly said, and the tear which was seen to flow at the same time, shew the feeling with which it was uttered, "I thank you, sir, for all your kind advice to me, and hope I shall never forget it."

> "Thus speaks affection, ere the youthful eye
> Can look regard, or brighten in reply."

Reader—are you a Sunday school teacher? If so, spare not your exertions—persevere faithfully in your duty—"Cast your bread upon the waters," and it shall be returned to you, and to them a thousand fold. And perhaps you may be permitted to witness results from your labors, similar to those I have mentioned, which would induce you to say with this teacher in the gratitude of your heart, "Verily I have my reward." G.

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MY EARLY DAYS. By Walter Ferguson, Esq. Boston, Bowles & Dearborn. 18mo. pp. 148.

Next to the influence of living examples, that of books is undoubtedly the strongest to which the young mind is subjected. Many there are, who if they could trace distinctly the whole of their intellectual history, would find the first wrong bias of a perverted imagination, or a continually erring judgment of men and things, to have been received from an ill chosen book; while there are others whose dearest and most delightful recollections hover over the hours spent in reading the careful selections of a pious and judicious mother.

Those books which exert the most direct and lasting influence on the young mind are undoubtedly of the narrative kind. The reader enters into the feelings of the fictitious personages, and remembers every circumstance and scene of the story with almost a personal interest. He gives himself up with all the ingenuousness and enthusiasm of youth to the writer's power; is carried along with the current of the narrative, regards the hero as his friend, and rejoices at his happiness, or weeps at his ruin, when he closes the volume. The works which are read when the mind and heart are thus open to their influence, should be such as are written under a deep sense of the presence of that Being, who will call to a strict account, all who have taken upon themselves the solemn responsibility of authorship. Of this class is the volume under consideration. With the full conviction which we have expressed of the important influence of our early reading on the sentiments and character, we would unhesitatingly

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recommend this work to the notice of all whose duty it is to select books for young persons.

It is one of the least recommendations of "My Early Days," that it is written in a masterly style, one which might safely be studied as a model of composition. Its principal charm consists in its graphic and touching delineations of those scenes of school-boy life, and fireside enjoyments which every one remembers with a smile and a sigh, which come to us in our dreams, when we have arrived at mature age, and are viewed in a softer light at our decline. No one can read this volume who has lived through the laughing days of childhood, without casting back many a pensive thought upon those happy moments, nor can any one fail to observe at the same time, the direction which his own character has received from circumstances and prejudices then almost unconsciously submitted to.

The early days of Walter Ferguson, differed in no important point from those of a thousand others, at least until he came to that event, which gave the colour to his fate; and the popularity which the work has already acquired, and which will doubtless continue to increase, is owing, in no small degree, to the circumstance that every one feels while reading it, that he is reading some passages, at least, in the history of his own mind.

But we are anticipating the story. It is a simple one. Walter is the son of a Scottish dissenting clergyman, who is settled in Ireland. His recollections commence with the tender care bestowed by his parents on his education at the fireside, and nothing can exceed the simplicity and pathos with which he describes this interesting period of his early days. The following is a beautiful picture.

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"I can yet fancy that I see my beloved preceptress sitting—as many a time she did in the calm evenings, on the rustic bench, which my father's ingenuity had constructed in front of our cottage, and which, on that account, was doubly dear to her—the rosy-cheeked girl at her foot, plucking the tops off the daisies that grew around her,—the half-smiling, half-serious, look of ill-repressed affection which I received when, with the arch cunning natural to childhood, I wilfully misunderstood my lessons, that I might have the pleasure of hearing her repeat them,—my father, at the open window, occasionally lifting his eyes from the book in which he was reading,—the delighted glance of intelligence that passed between them when my boyish prattle happened on some observation uncommon at my years, and the fond kiss that followed that glance; these are among the number of those sacred recollections on which memory loves to linger to the last hour of our being."

The important period arrives when he is to be placed at a day school, and a description of the school-house, his master and classmates, and an account of his school-boy friendships and adventures, follow, all in a strain of exalted morality and touching pathos, which must find its way to every feeling heart. The high-minded principles which governed his conduct at this interesting season, are such as to furnish an invaluable example to a school-boy. There is no ingenuous youth who would not feel the influence of Walter's noble sentiments and conduct in several of the adventures of this period.

He leaves the school and prosecutes his classical studies under his father's care, until a young heir-apparent to a baronet, a spoiled child, becomes the companion of his studies. The former part of the volume furnished examples. Here commences the lesson of warning. Gerald Fitz Maurice is almost a personification of seductive pleasure—intellectual pleasure, too, for he has wit, fancy,

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good humor, and the most fascinating manners, all without the shadow of moral principle. How many a youth has imbibed the bad principles of such a companion, while he flattered himself that he was only admiring his talents!

Walter passes a month at the splendid mansion of the Baronet, and his early habits of virtue are beginning to give way to the power of bad example, when a return to his father's house nearly restores him to his former self and to happiness. But he is invited to pay a farewell visit to Gerald on the occasion of his leaving the country for Dublin; and on his setting out to return home on the Sabbath morning, accompanied by his friend, he is persuaded to turn aside from the road and from the path of duty at the same time, and go to the sea-shore, to venture off in a boat to an island, which Gerald had been expressly forbidden by his parents to visit. On their attempting to return the boat is upset, Gerald is drowned, and Walter taken up in a state of insensibility. His mother, whose health is delicate, receives a shock on hearing the false intelligence that it was her son who was lost, which occasions her death.

The consequences to Walter are a temporary derangement, a broken constitution, and a long train of nervous sufferings. He returns to the paths of virtue, passes his days in scientific pursuits, and becomes heir to a fortune, when far advanced in life. We give the closing sentences for the sake of the admonition they contain.

"My years might have been longer in the land, had I honored my parents as I ought to have done. They would most certainly have been much happier. I have got sufficient warning to set my house in order—let me be watchful that the last hour may not have the

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most to do. To those who follow after me, and who may perchance profit by my experience, I have to say, with the sincerity of one that must soon renounce this world—that I never yet had a happy moment, when I was not obedient to the laws of God, and that I can attribute the sufferings of my whole existence, to no other cause, than the few, but fatal follies, of my Early Days."

It is hardly necessary for us to remark in conclusion, that this little volume is one of the best which could possibly be placed in the hands of youth at the period when the principles and habits are forming, that it should be welcomed at every domestic fireside, and find a place in every juvenile library.

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL.

GROUP after group are gathering—such as prest
  Once to their Saviour's arms, and gently laid
Their cherub heads upon his shielding breast,
  Though sterner souls the fond approach forbade;—
Group after group glide on with noiseless tread
  And round Jehovah's sacred altar meet,
Where holy thoughts in infant hearts are bred,
  And holy words their ruby lips repeat,
Oft with a chasten'd glance, in modulation sweet.

Yet some there are, upon whose childish brows,
  Wan poverty hath done the work of care;
Look up, ye sad ones!—'t is *your Father's house*
  Beneath whose consecrated dome you are;
More gorgeous robes ye see, and trappings rare,
  And watch the gaudier forms that gaily move,
And deem, perchance, mistaken as you are,
  The "coat of many colors" proves *His* love,
Whose sign is *in the heart* and whose reward *above*.

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And ye, blest laborers in this humble sphere,
  To deeds of saintlike charity inclined,
Who from your cells of meditation dear
  Come forth to gird the weak, untutor'd mind,—
Yet ask no payment, save one smile refined
  Of grateful love,—one tear of contrite pain:
Meekly ye forfeit to your mission kind
  The rest of earthly Sabbaths.—Be your gain
A Sabbath without end, 'mid yon celestial plain.

Conn. Mirror.

INTELLIGENCE.

British and Foreign Unitarian Association.—The Annual General Meeting of this Association was held in June last. The Report then read, speaks of many cheering circumstances in the present aspect of the Unitarian cause. In the Foreign Department it is announced that Mr Adam has accepted the proposal made to him to become the permanent Missionary of the Association in British India. Very interesting communications continue to be received also, from William Roberts, who has for thirty years, amid the severest trials, and against every discouragement, labored to diffuse the pure Gospel at Madras. It had been stated to the Committee that the friends of vital and liberal Christianity in France, are anxiously seeking to become acquainted with the grounds of the Unitarian doctrine, and a supply of Unitarian publications was voted for the purpose of opening the way for the dissemination of the truth there.

Some interesting information had been obtained respecting the present situation of the Churches in Transylvania. The number who profess the faith in that quarter, was estimated at 50,000, They have a College at Klausenburg with about 300 students, and two preparatory schools at Thorenburg and Keresztur.

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In reference to the United States, the same Report observes—"The details of the progress of Unitarian Christianity among our American brethren are most satisfactory and encouraging; whilst the measures taken to unite the different and scattered Unitarian interests in one great and efficient body, cannot fail of producing the happiest results. Your Committee trust that in the progress of the ensuing year, a more active and detailed correspondence will be established between these twin Associations; and that they will run the race of benevolent exertion in the kind spirit of brotherhood, and with all the energy and devotedness of enlightened zeal."

Synod of Ulster.—The population of the three other Provinces of Ireland is in a vast proportion Roman Catholic. But Ulster is principally inhabited by the descendants of Scotch Presbyterians. They retain the Presbyterian form of church government and generally the Calvinistic doctrines. There is great latitude allowed, however, with respect to doctrines, under the Synod of Ulster; hence there are among its members, Arminians, Arians and other Unitarians as well as Calvinists. Out of fourteen Presbyteries composing the General Synod, only four make a subscription to the Westminster Confession indispensable; nor are the members of even these all Calvinists.

But the progress of enlightened and liberal views of religion in the North of Ireland is greatly impeded by ignorance, bigotry, and a persecuting temper. The Christian Pioneer, an excellent Unitarian work, recently commenced at Glasgow, in Scotland, contains the minutes of a meeting of the Synod of Ulster, held in June last, which afford some striking specimens of the rancor with which there, as every where else, Unitarians are treated by their prejudiced brethren. After an unsuccessful attempt to expel their Clerk from his office merely because he had avowed Arian sentiments, it was proposed to introduce an Orthodox Test of faith in the Trinity. To the original motion one member offered as an amendment, that the doctrines of Christianity are contained in the writings of Calvin and Knox, and the Westminster Confession, and that these are the doctrines of this body. Another, while he was a Calvinist, said, he wished to *avoid the terms which are used by Calvinists* in the various discussions which have occurred in the Church.

A debate now ensued among the Orthodox members relating to the

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terms which should be used to express the Trinity.—As the Bible itself contains no model, we do not wonder at this.—One wanted it to run "Father, Word, and Spirit"—another, "Father, Son, and Spirit"—another, "Father, Word, and Holy Ghost"—another, "Father, Son, and Holy Ghost." And some desired that they should only express their faith in the Trinity, and not be so particular in what words it was declared. In the course of debate, one reverend gentleman avowed that it was the purpose of his party, to have a Committee of Synod appointed, who should send Missionaries into certain congregations where the Gospel was not faithfully preached; and where a minister was found neglecting to preach the truth, to suspend him—and if he did not repent, to lop him off—or excommunicate him. He also would preclude the members of that body from holding ministerial communion with persons differing in opinion on those points which he held to be vital—as the Trinity, &c.

The discussion drew from the Arian members a determined opposition to all religious tests—and it is added, that some of the people of the town where the Synod assembled, not before friendly to Unitarians, were induced by what they witnessed of the ability and good temper of the Arians, to seek a better knowledge of their principles.

Unitarian Tracts.—We are much gratified to learn that the demand for the tracts published by the American Unitarian Association, has greatly increased during the past year. Within that time, it has been found necessary to reprint nearly all the old tracts, and to publish much larger editions of new ones.

It is with no little pleasure that we are enabled also to state that the demand for these tracts in the states of Connecticut, New York, Pennsylvania, and Ohio, has increased fourfold, within the last twelve months—their circulation in these states will do much toward lessening the prejudices which there exist against the Unitarian Faith. We say *prejudices*, because we believe that among the great body of the people, the notion that with the word Unitarian, is necessarily associated any thing repugnant to the character of a true Christian, has not been adopted as the result of any investigations of their own. It is, we fear, a part of the business of some of the Orthodox party to create and keep alive such impressions. Nothing more is needed to counteract them than a right understanding of Unitarianism, and we

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rejoice that the means which the Unitarian tracts place in the hands of the friends of liberal christianity, promise to do so much toward dispelling falsehood, and establishing a fair judgment of our opinions.

It is not, however, in the southern, middle, and western states only, that false impressions in regard to Unitarianism exist. In the New England states, and even in our own state there are many, very many, to whom the doctrines of Unitarianism have been exhibited only through the distorted medium of prejudice and passion. Let the means of becoming justly acquainted with our motives and principles be more generally diffused, and we shall escape some portion at least of the odium to which we are now so ignorantly as well as unjustly subjected. It will then be seen whether we are indeed hostile to christianity. And they who now blindly rebuke, may with better knowledge acquire a kinder temper.

We began this article more particularly for the purpose of noticing an Association which has lately been formed in this City—we allude to the *Unitarian Book and Pamphlet Society*. The object of this association is the purchase and gratuitous distribution of the tracts published by the Unitarian Association, or such other pamphlets as may be by them recommended. Many circumstances have rendered it impossible for the American Unitarian Association to supply the demands made upon them for tracts for gratuitous distribution. This Association undertake in part to answer this demand. In the first report of the committee to the society they say—

"In respect to the subject before us, let the members of the society be actuated by a christian temper, in all their deliberations and doings; let the publications they distribute, breathe the spirit of the Gospel, while they expose error and inculcate truth; let them not be obtruded where they are not asked for, and do not promise to be useful; and let there be nothing offensive in the mode of procuring funds for the accomplishment of the society's object, and your committee have no doubt that the plan which has been submitted to them to consider and forward, will prove highly useful to the community, and at the same time contribute not a little to the advantage of the members of the society themselves, by interesting them more in one another, and in the love and practice of the Religion which they undertake with a zeal so praiseworthy, to recommend to others."

Persons wishing for tracts for gratuitous distribution may obtain them on application to the secretary, at No. 8, Washington Street.

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Massachusetts Society for the Suppression of Intemperance.—A public meeting of this Society was held at the Julien Hall on Monday evening, Nov. 5th, at 7 o'clock, and besides the members of the Society, was attended by a large number of citizens friendly to its objects.

The meeting was opened with prayer by the Rev. Mr Palfrey; after which the Annual Report of the Society was read.

The principal object of this report was to present a sketch of the principles and policy which should govern the friends of temperance in the measures they may adopt for the promotion of their purposes.

After noticing a variety of circumstances which indicate a favorable change in the public sentiment with regard to the use of ardent spirits, the report went on to consider the influence which the habit of moderate drinking has in producing immoderate drinking, and it was urged that the only sure way of preventing the one was to relinquish the other. The abolition of the practice of moderate drinking during labor, under exposure, &c. must be brought about by convincing mankind not only that it is useless, but injurious; and it was particularly urged that the most effectual method of doing this, was by impressing early on the minds of the young, the important truth, that the use of ardent spirits is always both useless and injurious, even in the smallest quantities.

The propriety of recommending total abstinence from the use of wine was next considered, and it was remarked, that although some arguments might be brought in support of its prohibition, yet that on the whole it was unreasonable and impolitic; since although in excess it may be injurious, still it holds out but little comparative temptation to excess, and by the introduction of some of its milder kinds, it may be made an important instrument in promoting the suppression of intemperance.

Some account was next given of the effects which have attended the exhibition of the various medicines which have been prepared for the cure of intemperance, of the degree of efficacy which is to be expected from their use, of the manner in which they should be managed, when administered, and of the various means by which their favorable effects are to be supported and rendered permanent.

In conclusion it was remarked, that it was important to keep a strict watch upon all those occasions where the young very often,

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probably, taste ardent spirits for the first time, and to remove when practicable the temptations which are thus thrown in their way. That many persons, no doubt, may date their habit of intemperance from the time when they first tasted ardent spirit on Boston Common and acquired a relish for it; that many others acquire the same relish for it at the theatre. That if spirits were banished from the Common and from the theatre, many would be saved from habits of intemperance, and that there are many other occasions and places which might be made the subjects of the same remarks. It was particularly recommended to sea-captains and ship-owners, that they should endeavor to bring up the young men who enter their vessels to labor without any use of rum.

The report was concluded by offering the following resolutions for the consideration of the meeting. And after being advocated by Dr Z. Boylston Adams, Dr Channing, Rev. E. S. Gannett, Hon. William Sturgis, Dr J. B. Flint, and Rev. William Collier, they were passed unanimously:

Resolved, 1st, That in the opinion of this meeting, there is sufficient evidence that ardent spirits are not necessary as a refreshment or support during labor, but, on the contrary, are absolutely injurious to health;—that to the general *moderate* use of them is to be chiefly attributed the prevalent habit of intemperance; and that entire abstinence from them, except when prescribed as medicines, be recommended to all classes of society.

2d, That it be recommended to ship-owners, masters of vessels, farmers, mechanics, proprietors and superintendents of manufacturing establishments, and all others having the care of young persons when first entering upon laborious occupations, to endeavor to induce those under their charge to form the habit of labor, without any use of ardent spirits.

3d, That it be recommended to all having charge of the education of the young, to endeavor to produce a strong impression on their minds of the dangerous tendency of even a moderate use of ardent spirits.

It was then voted, that the Report and Resolutions be printed for distribution; and that the proceedings of the meeting be signed by the President and Secretary of the Society, and published in the newspapers. JOHN C. WARREN, *President*.

JOHN WARE, *Secretary*.

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Unitarianism in Ohio.—Extract from a letter to the publishers of the Advocate, dated Marietta, Ohio, Nov. 28, 1827. "Twelve months since, not a soul in this county would acknowledge themselves Unitarians out of my family—now I can count over 300 that attend church almost every Sabbath, who say openly they always were Unitarians but did not know it."

Boston Sunday School Society.—This society consists of the teachers and friends of a few of the Sunday schools in Boston. At a meeting of the Society which was held on the evening of the 28th of November, for the election of officers, the following gentlemen were chosen; Rev. Joseph Tuckerman President; Mr Moses Grant, Vice President; J. F. Flagg, M. D. Corresponding Secretary; Mr F. T. Gray, Recording Secretary; Mr B. H. Greene, Treasurer.

The first public meeting of the society was held in the church in Federal Street, on the evening of the 12th of December, at which time reports were read by the superintendents of the West Church, school the Hancock, Howard and Franklin schools, the 12th Congregational Church school, and the school in Cambridge-port; and a general report of the schools, with the superintendants of which this Society holds a correspondence, was read by the corresponding secretary. A report would also have been read from the Hollis Street Church school, had not the lateness of the hour at which it was presented, and the time required for reading the other reports, made its omission indispensable. It was not without much regret that the decision was made to omit this report. The church on this occasion was very full; and the best possible evidence of the sympathy and interest of a very large audience was given, by the great silence and attention which were maintained during nearly two hours and a half, in which the reports were read, and addresses were made by Judge Simmons, and by the Hon. Mr Phillips. Of the reports we say nothing, because we trust that they will all be printed. But of the addresses we may be permitted to say, that we believe that none ever were made, or could have been made, more suited either for instruction, or for encouragement in a good work. The strong good sense which characterized these addresses, the great principles stated and illustrated in them, and the calm, but deep feeling with which they were spoken, have left an impression which we think will not soon, or easily be effaced. Every one who

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was present at this meeting we think must have strongly felt, that his obligation to live for others is commensurate with his opportunity and his ability of ministering to their improvement and happiness; and that "the great reward of success is, the increased ability which it gives to do good."

The object of this society is, not to establish in their schools a uniform system of instruction; but, by fair discussion, a free comparison of opinions, to receive, and if we may, to give light, on the means of advancing the religious education, and of forming the religious and moral character, of the young. Each school in this society, is left at perfect liberty respecting the course that shall be pursued in it. Let teachers in all the departments of instruction associate, not to bind and shackle one another, but to impart what they may for mutual improvement, and mutually to respect each other's convictions and rights, and the cause of knowledge, of pure religion and virtue, and of human happiness, may be greatly advanced by their exertions.

New Work.—Proposals are issued by Israel Worsley, Esq. Plymouth, England, for a work whose object is to trace the history of the Ten Tribes of Israel with a view to show the probability of the American Aborigines having derived their origin from them.

Unitarian Churches.—During the year past, two houses for Unitarian worship have been erected in Maine; one in New Hampshire; four in Massachusetts, and one in Pennsylvania. Seven Unitarian clergymen have been ordained or installed in Massachusetts; two in Maine, and two in New Hampshire.

Ordination.—Mr W. H. White, from the Theological Institution at Cambridge, is to be ordained on the 2nd instant, as pastor of the Church and society in Littleton, Mass.

The editor acknowledges with gratiude the aid of several correspondents, in the present number of the Unitarian Advocate, and he solicits communications from these and others, who may have the same cause at heart, in future numbers.

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THE

UNITARIAN ADVOCATE.

VOL. I. FEBRUARY, 1828. No. 2.

THE PROPER UNITY OF JESUS.

UNITARIANS regard Jesus as strictly one, a single intelligent being, one separate agent. When he uses the pronouns "I," "me," "mine own self," they understand him to mean always his entire person, his whole nature, all that was himself. In every place where his name occurs, they attach to it the same signification. This is required by all grammatical usage. If Jesus be a proper name, it stands for the person, the whole person, known by the appellation. It must be received precisely like other proper names. We never omit any part of what constituted the persons known by the names "Paul," "Peter," "James," whenever these names occur. "Jesus," is used by the sacred writers in precisely the same way as Paul, why should we apply it otherwise? Have we any authority for departing from the common usage in the one case more than in the other? Have the evangelists and apostles, or even Jesus himself, intimated directly or indirectly, that his name stands now for a part and then for the whole of his person, here for God, and there for man? No. In so applying the appellation we

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have no other warrant than a supposed doctrinal difficulty. But we hold it to be an acknowledged principle, that interpretation should rather be grammatical than doctrinal. We are not to violate the rules of grammar for the sake of a perplexity, which may often proceed from our own ignorance alone.

If we adopt the opinion that our Saviour used the personal pronouns "I" and "me," sometimes in one sense and sometimes in another, giving no intimation in which sense he spoke at the moment, we have a worse evil than grammatical anomaly, which is no less than a want of truth and honesty in the speaker himself. Should a man solemnly declare to you that *he* knew nothing about a particular matter, would it save his veracity to pretend that he meant only to assert that he had not a knowledge of it through his senses, although he had derived in another way the acquaintance with the subject which you supposed he might have? Mental reservation is not consistent with honesty. Prevarication in the holy Jesus is impossible. We say then, that we *dare* not so interpret his words on any occasion, as to make him mean less or more than his words plainly import. When he declares "of mine own self I can do nothing," we presume not to understand him as if he intended by *own self* less than his whole self, his entire person.

It is esteemed a sound rule in interpreting any book whatever, to make the plain and positive passages the standard to which all others are to be accommodated. "If one passage be plain and accurately expressed, so as to admit of no doubt, it cannot admit of any accommodation. The doubtful one must be accommodated then to the plain one." Thus says a critic whose authority no

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Trinitarian will dispute,—Ernesti. Now we take the course here required, in reading the New Testament. We find such plain passages as these, "Jesus of Nazareth a man approved of God among you by miracles, which God did by him. The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew, him hath God exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour. God hath made that same Jesus whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. One mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus. God hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he hath ordained, whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead." To these and many other unequivocal declarations, which never have been or can be the subject of doubt, so far as concerns the nature of the person of whom they speak, we bring all other passages as a standard, and we interpret them so that they shall not contradict these.

What higher characters does Jesus sustain than Saviour, Lord, Mediator? Yet are these plainly and positively announced in the texts cited, as the characters sustained by a man who was slain, crucified, raised from the dead: a man, whom God endued with power, illuminated, exalted, distinguished from all other beings, and raised to be their Prince and Lord: a man whom God in the most solemn manner approved; who is his dear Son; in whom he is well pleased; to whom he imparted of his own "fulness;" the image and representative of the Father: a man, but not a *mere* man. So far from it, that he had superhuman endowments. Never man spake like this man; never was there so much wisdom, and might, and purity manifested as by him; he is above

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all; the angels do him reverence; and seated at the right hand of the Majesty on high, he is the object of a veneration inferior only to that which we owe to him who sitteth on the throne itself.

We must not forget that while such plain and unequivocal declarations testify that Jesus' nature was human, there is no similar testimony to prove that he had *two* natures, or that he was God as well as man. Many things are related of his birth, his miracles, his doctrine, his devout and benevolent character, but not once is it plainly stated that in his single person he united the divine perfections and human imperfections. Now if this were a fact, is it not more wonderful than any mighty work or any noble virtue? Is it not such a fact as must have been likely to make a very striking and powerful impression on the apostles' minds, and with that impression would they not speak and write about it with plainness and force, often declaring it, and more often alluding to it? Can any one suppose that a subject which is now so full of interest, should then have been passed over without a single plain, positive announcement? Was the "mystery hidden for ages" concerning the adoption of the Gentiles into the same community with the Jews, a thing to be spoken of as Paul has spoken of it, and is the overwhelming secret that Jesus was God and man also, left to be a mere matter of doubtful inference? We say of doubtful inference, because all must allow that it is drawn by *inference* from the sacred records, and this inference is from texts to which men whose love to truth and capacity for interpretation are equal, have given a very different application.

It is replied to all this, that the sacred writers some-

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times used such language respecting Jesus as is not applicable to a human nature, and therefore if their words are not to be wholly rejected, we must suppose in our Lord a higher nature to which they may properly refer. But we rejoin, by asking, if all this language were translated aright and applied no otherwise to Christ than we can so apply it, consistently with other language too clear and positive to be mistaken, the inference that Christ was God remains inevitable? If not inevitable, we are not at liberty to make it. If any texts of scripture *can* be so rendered, without violating the rules of just interpretation, as to save them from contradicting other texts which are so expressed that their meaning is indisputable, we have no choice. We possess not the right to give them another construction because it is possible that the words alone will bear it. We must abide by the rule, that a positive assertion in clear terms, must not be altered so as to accommodate it to the passages in the same writings, not as clear or positive. Ought not one who knows that an interpretation is practicable, fairly so, by which all that is written will entirely agree, to prefer that to another which can only produce agreement partially, and by subtracting something from the sense of the plainest words, even such terms as the personal pronouns; and which spreads confusion over the whole gospel history? Ought we not to prefer an interpretation which prevents any appearance of contradiction and prevarication in our holy Master, to one which suffers him to say myself, my own self, when he only intends half what those words include; which makes him declare he did not know positively and without reservation, what he actually did know in one manner at least?

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The case stands thus. Certain passages are interpreted to mean that Jesus was a divine being. This interpretation is in no instance necessary, though it may seem not impossible. Unitarians offer a fair construction for them all. But others will not avail themselves of this construction. They cleave to a Trinitarian exposition as if it were the only one possible. And they adopt as the means of conciliating difficult passages with plain ones, a doctrine which is more difficult to be expressed or understood than any in the whole compass of knowledge, and which, after all, leaves greater perplexities than it is used to remove, in the sacred text itself. Is this right? Is it the way we interpret other ancient books?

Great things are said in scripture respecting the Son of God. We refer them all to his official dignity, and that power and authority which, he has affirmed, were given him by his Father. His original nature need not be taken into view, in our exposition of them. We may believe, love, and obey Jesus, without asking what rank he holds in the universe. But this does not satisfy others. They must have the point settled first,—who he was? And thus they determine it.—"*The name Son of God is given to the man Jesus, because he is a partaker of the divine perfections.*" "*That man who shed his blood on the cross can be regarded as the Creator.*" "*The being who is God, is likewise man, and inversely, the being who is man, is likewise God.*" Biblical Theology by Storr and Flatt, translated by Schmucker, pages 152, 155, 2d vol.

Is it not affirmed in the quotations just made, that a man is divine, and that God is human? And can words

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express a more complete contradiction? We know not what we can reject after admitting this. With what consistency deny that God has hands, eyes, feet, while you believe that he who had them all was God? Did Storr want discernment to perceive that the moment when the man Jesus should begin to partake divine perfections he must cease to be human, and so it was no more the man Jesus who thus partook? If the infinite be human, the human is infinite, that is, not human at all, for human is known to be finite. Surely one ought to weigh well the difficulties to be removed by such means, before he gives them up. We are not ready to discredit the sacred books by contradictions, for the sake of aiding our ignorance in the explication of a few passages contained in them. And we could not produce an argument for Unitarianism more strong than these very citations afford. For if, in order to keep clear of Unitarianism, we must adopt *such* statements as our creed, we can do no *worse* by rejecting them, and adopting Unitarianism.

Let it not be said that we misrepresent our authors. We cannot read their writings otherwise than they are written. Similar citations may be multiplied from all Trinitarian books. We have many more to produce from that before us. Remarking on the phrase, "it pleased the Father," in Colossians i. 19, the author says: "it expresses the free purpose of God to bestow all divine perfections on the man Jesus." And in another place he speaks of "the divine nature of the man Jesus." See pages 158, 165, 2d vol. The plain import in each case is, not merely that Jesus was united to God, but that the man was made to become God. And who can believe

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that? It is an impossibility. We charge the doctrine of two natures in Christ with the impossibility, and reject it accordingly. If any one pretend that a proper statement of that doctrine would leave the two natures wholly distinct although in union, we have never seen such a statement. To confound the two natures, is the natural and necessary consequence of the doctrine, state it how you will. The very purpose for which the doctrine is adopted compels to such an amalgamation. That purpose is thus expressed by Storr. "The just Governor of the Universe, before his entrance on the government of the world, made provision that the honor of the law, according to which he dispensed rewards and punishments, should not be violated, but on the other hand rather promoted by the work of redemption, and by the mercy which, for special reasons, he extended to the family of man. This he accomplished by his own personal obedience, and by voluntarily suffering the punishment of our sins," page 241, 2d vol. A creature's sufferings would not be adequate to the atonement here intended. He can do but his own duty. Therefore the sacrifice must be divine: "the just Governor himself." What upheld the universe when its Creator and Governor was dying?

Without dwelling upon the contradictions involved in the doctrine of a divine and human nature in our Lord, we would ask our readers to run over the New Testament with a view to substitute for the name Jesus, or Lord Jesus Christ, the proper corresponding phraseology, if this doctrine be correct. It is often said that the reader may always decide which nature is spoken of by the things spoken, but it is not the case. And we are left

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to conjecture, darkness, and confusion. Besides, there are instances in which inferiority to God is predicated of Christ, and yet which demand that he should be regarded in his *highest* character. Take the following. "Of that day and hour knoweth no man; no, not the angels, which are in heaven, neither the Son, but my Father only." First this knowledge is denied of *all* men, and the man Jesus is included by necessity. Next the same knowledge is denied of the angels, intelligences *above* men, but inferior to the Christ who had obtained by divine gift a "more excellent name than they." Lastly, this denial is extended to include the Son also. Jesus in his highest character, that to which he is exalted by God, who sanctified and sent him into the world. To say that the Son means the human nature of the complex person who was God and man also, is to make our Lord speak thus:—'of that day knoweth no man, nor the angels, nor the man joined to myself—but myself to whom he is so united.' I know it. And yet I do not know it. What title is given to Christ which indicates his dignity more strikingly than "the Son?" That title Trinitarians themselves employ as the highest. Yet it is here clearly shown to be not equivalent to God.

In confirmation of the view we have given of this passage, we may quote again from Storr. Among the proofs he produces in favor of a double nature in our Lord, is Galatians, i. 1. "An apostle, not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised him from the dead." Jesus is here distinguished from men, hence he must have another nature besides his human. But we do not thus argue. He is as clearly distinguished from God the Father, as from men. Yet we

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have a right to ask, if being so distinguished from men here proves that Christ in his higher nature is meant, does not the same distinction prove that his highest character is intended in Mark xiii. 32? We think Paul's design was simply to assert that his apostleship was derived from the highest authority, Christ "the head of the church," and God "the head of Christ."

(*To be continued.*)

UNIFORMITY OF OPINION NOT ESSENTIAL.

The founder of our religion evidently intended it should have a controlling influence over the affections, feelings, and passions, especially those brought into exercise in the intercourse of men with each other. It was a wish which he cherished with great fondness, that he might see his followers living together in peace and harmony; keeping themselves free from jars and contentions; suppressing every form of malevolent disposition; exercising mutual forbearance, candor and charity, and bound together in love by their attachment and regard for him. For this temper of mind in them he prayed most earnestly when, just before his death, he commended them to his Father and their Father. To this temper he continually exhorted them while he lived; and his apostles afterwards repeated and urged the same upon their converts. To "keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace," must therefore be regarded as a thing of vital importance to the interests of christianity.

It is an interesting question which meets us at our entrance upon this subject, how far unanimity of views on

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religious subjects is essential to preserving a unity of spirit among christians.

There is no idea which seems to have been more generally, or with less reason, admitted in the christian community than that, in order to be of one mind, men must necessarily be of the same opinion; and that differences of religious thinking are the worst evils that can befall the church; whereas, in our apprehension, this very notion, of the necessity of entire agreement in religious belief, has been productive, if of no other evils, of the most fearful schisms which have ever been witnessed among the followers of Christ. This opinion of perfect uniformity of belief being essential on religious subjects, had its origin in the Romish church. It was the direct consequence of the Pope's infallibility, which itself rested in people's minds on another idea, equally unfounded;—that was the supposed absolute necessity of keeping the church free from the slightest tinge of error. For, if perfect freedom from mistake were not deemed essential, where could be the need of an infallible decider of controversies? And, if there be in that church an infallible spiritual guide, it is certainly right that every body should acquiesce in its decisions,—when there would of course be an entire uniformity of sentiment on religious subjects. Thus this idea of the necessity of a perfect agreement in religious belief is the natural attendant on the conviction of our having a tribunal that cannot be mistaken, to which we may carry our differences of opinion;—and it must stand or fall with our belief in such a tribunal. For though it will be admitted that truth is but one, and cannot declare itself on both sides of a question, yet, unless we have such an infallible

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criterion of controversy in the last resort, it will be impossible for us in all cases to agree which the right side is, or ever to come to an entire unanimity of sentiment. The reason is,—not that truth is not something in itself certain and unchangeable, but that, with our imperfect faculties, we cannot see things in their true nature, and as they really are. We repeat, therefore, that these three ideas,—the necessity of keeping the christian church absolutely free from error,—the necessity of an unerring judge of differences,—and the consequent necessity of an absolute agreement in religious opinions,—are all connected together, and must stand or fall together. They lie at the very foundation of the vast structure of the Romish church.

The reformers, when they renounced the papal authority, to have been consistent, should have given up these other ideas also, which, as we have shown, must stand or fall with that. But they did not; they retained, in their separation from the catholic communion, their belief in the necessity of guarding the faith of the church from the least speck of error, and,—what was to be sure but the direct consequence of their being able to do this,—their conviction of the necessity of an entire agreement in doctrinal matters. They left not these sentiments, where they belonged, among the errors of popery, with which they were perfectly consistent, but they brought them away, to introduce confusion and schism among themselves. This was the inevitable consequence; for if entire and unerring uniformity of belief on religious subjects were deemed essential, who was to decide what that belief should be, now that they had renounced the spiritual guidance of Rome?

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The reformers, no doubt, assumed the true ground when they rested their cause on the right of private judgment and the sufficiency of the scriptures; but they did not,—they durst not,—follow out their own principles. Perhaps they could not; so shackled were their minds by the conviction that an absolute and unerring uniformity of faith was essential. But, as they could no longer lean upon papal infallibility, what were they to hold out to the world in its stead? To leave every man to gather his faith by the use of his own judgment in exploring the scriptures, seemed to them to be leaving every thing at loose ends, and likely to bring the most fatal distractions into the church. Therefore they took a middle course;—on the one hand, denying the authority of the Romish church, and, on the other, not leaving men to act on the principles of the right of private judgment and the sufficiency of the scriptures, by which they justified their separation from it; they drew up formularies of faith, in which, it seems, they expected those that should follow them should acquiesce as unhesitatingly, as they had hitherto done in the infallibility of Rome. It is doubtless very natural that every man should believe that he himself is certainly in the right,—that every body who differs from him is wrong,—and that every fair-minded man must see things just as he does. These feelings we all know to be natural; and it is not strange that men, just beginning to think for themselves, should feel their influence. But it needs no great penetration to perceive that they greatly misjudged. All men could not see things just as they did, and therefore drew off from them, and made out their own confessions of faith, which they, with the same narrowmindedness, wished to impose on their followers

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and successors; and this has been the course of things ever since, until Protestant christendom has become divided and separated into innumerable factions, very few of which do not consider all, who are out of the pale of their own sect, as in fact excluded from the privileges and hopes of christians.

Now shall we learn nothing from all this? Can it be that there is a necessity for this unanimity of religious opinion, in order to peace and unity of spirit in Christ's church, when it is in the pursuit of this very unanimity, that the bloodiest persecutions have been adopted, the fiercest contentions arisen, and the widest breaches been made? It cannot be. The true bond of christian union as far as belief is concerned, is the cordial reception of Christ as each one honestly conceives him to be revealed in the Gospel. This was the only point of faith inquired about in the time of the apostles; and this is sufficient. If Christians can agree upon other religious subjects, it is well; their bond of union will be drawn closer by this circumstance. But if they cannot agree, what is to be done? Shall they withdraw from each other? deny to each other the christian name? and, if it were possible, shut each other out from heaven? Is this the spirit of our religion? Can the Saviour be pleased to see his followers manifesting such a disposition?

Why shall we not rather see and acknowledge, that this long sought unanimity is not a thing to be attained to, with our present imperfect faculties? Why should a nearer coincidence of views be thought requisite or attainable on religious subjects than on any other? Every body readily admits that with our short-sighted faculties and fallible judgments, we cannot hope to arrive at a

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uniform way of thinking on matters of common life, some of which are certainly very important. Yet men do not, unless malignant and bad passions are permitted to rankle in their breasts, suffer the differences of opinion on other subjects, however momentous, to interrupt the charities of life, or break off their friendly feelings towards each other. Where would be the harm if we should adopt the same generous treatment of each other in our religious differences? If we should grant that the questions at issue have all the importance which to many they seem to have, is it just or modest, for any one set of Christians to assume that they have certainly arrived at the truth, and that all others, however honest and sincere they may be in their researches, are in a fatal error? If indeed, as many suppose, God has granted to their own sect a miraculous inward light, by which they arrive at their particular views, let them give us satisfactory evidence of the miracle, and we shall be bound to admit their doctrines as of the same authority as those of the Saviour. But then we should receive them on different grounds from those of protestantism; it would no longer be the right of private judgment nor the sufficiency of the scriptures that are to be appealed to, but this miraculous, internal light. But if no such miracle can be proved, we ask again where is the candor, where is the modesty in their claiming to themselves infallibility, and shutting out from the church all the rest of those who believe in Christ as they conscientiously think him to be revealed in the Gospel? If any say that their views of christianity oblige them to be thus exclusive in regard to those they deem in error, however honestly and conscientiously they may have become so, we ask if this very circum-

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stance affords not a strong presumption against the correctness of their views? Ought we not to be very careful how we admit religious sentiments which have the effect of contracting God's grace within such very narrow limits? And if, after all, they still are persuaded that error on religious subjects, though conscientiously arrived at, is a crime of such awful magnitude in the sight of heaven, have they not as much reason as any others to fear that they may be in this error, and that its dreadful consequences may be visited on them? Are they not liable to mistakes? And if conscientious mistakes in the concerns of religion are dangerous on one side, are they no cause of alarm on the other? Besides, what an idea does this give us of our heavenly Father? What better reason can any man hope to give in the presence of God for having held to any doctrine of religion than this,—that in the cautious and prayerful use of his faculties, and of the light afforded him, he conscientiously believed it to be from God? Would not this account of the matter, if true, be favorably received by the Judge of all, even though the doctrine were erroneous? We should be in a sad case indeed if this were not so. The testimony of a good conscience would be worth nothing to us; for it would avail us nothing when we shall most of all need it,—at the hour of death and in the day of judgment. My friends, without any worse feeling than sorrow for those who have such a belief, we have reason to rejoice that we have not so learned Christ. If we have read our Bibles to any effect, we think we have been there taught that religion is to be something principally exerting itself in the heart, and in the life; we indeed think truth to be of the most sacred importance; especially that which has

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a bearing upon the practice of the duties we owe to God, to our Saviour, to one another, and to our own souls; and we rejoice to think that in proportion as christian truth bears more directly upon these subjects, it is clear, satisfactory and undisputed. We rejoice to believe that He who made us, and is to be our final judge, is a perfectly just Being; and that, having given us our conscience, our judgment, and the light of revelation to be our guides, he will not condemn us, if humbly and prayerfully following them, we should, through our natural frailty, be led into error. W. F. R.

[For the Uniatarian Advocate.]

PRAYER FOR FRIENDS AT SEA.

Lord of the wind's and ocean's swell,
'T is thine, when angry tempests rave,
At will their fiercest rage to quell;
'T is thine in peril's hour to save.

In sickly climes, when tainted airs
Breathe in each gale infection's breath,
A charmed life the voyager bears,
Who makes thy arm his shield from death.

In port, or bounding o'er the deep,
For friends away we make our prayer,
Each loved one, Lord, in safety keep,
Committed to thy guardian care.

'Mid favoring gales and skies serene,
O keep them mindful still of thee;
So in each dark and fearful scene
Of them thy love shall mindful be.

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Haven'd at home, the dark abyss
Of waters pass'd, all perils o'er,
Give us to know the full glad bliss
Of friends long sever'd met once more.

Then with united heart and voice
We 'll wake th' exulting hymn of praise,
And evermore in thee rejoice,
Our sun and shield in all our ways. J. F. S.

RELIGION IN DOMESTIC LIFE.

RELIGION is necessary to render domestic life a scene of uninterrupted enjoyment. Marriage was designed by our heavenly Father to be a source of the most perfect temporal happiness. And when the religion of Jesus exerts its governing and sanctifying influence on the heart and life; and causes the wedded pair to cultivate mutual friendship and affection; to be uniformly kind and obliging; accommodating and forbearing; charitable and forgiving; patient, and contented, and cheerful; and truly devoted to the promotion of each other's welfare—this benevolent design is answered, and this purest of earthly felicity is secured. But when this is not the case, as sometimes happens; when those are united who have no correct knowledge of each other's characters; whose tastes, and dispositions, and habits are unlike; and over whose feelings, and passions, and conduct, christian principles exercise no controlling power, the wise plan of providence is frustrated. Thence arise those complaints and criminations; those angry disputes and unhappy difficulties; that unkind treatment and alienation of

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affection, which render this connexion a state of contention, discord and misery.

But this is not all. The example of parents is ever carefully watched and imitated by their children. If the injunctions of the Gospel are habitually disregarded by the parents; if the words of profanity, and falsehood, and passion often fall from their lips; if the trifles of earth, the failings of acquaintances, the tales of passing scandal, the means and measures of acquiring popularity and wealth; and the follies, and fashions, and amusements of gay life constitute the chief subjects of conversation; if the supply of animal wants, and the gratification of vain desires, and the promotion of temporal aggrandizement are made the principal objects of attention and pursuit; if no decided respect is shown for undeviating rectitude and moral goodness; if the word and ordinances of God are slighted; and they attend the sanctuary only in compliance with fashion, or habit, or a love of excitement and display;—if the christian instruction of their children is neglected; if the good seeds of virtue are never implanted on their tender minds; if the pernicious weeds of vice and ungoverned passion are suffered to spring up and flourish unchecked; if they are permitted to resort to places of idleness and dissipation for amusement and companions; after such an education, if they become useful and religious members of society, it will *not* be in consequence of the example and instruction of their parents. They may indeed, as some few have done, break the shackles of ignorance and irreligion, and become ornaments in our christian community. But this is scarcely probable. For they will be peculiarly exposed to so many temptations; to temptations from their own

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undisciplined passions and ungoverned desires; from thoughtless and profligate companions; from vice and infidelity, which will beset them in every form; that there is danger, *great* danger, of their becoming pests to the community, scourges to their friends, and curses to themselves. And all this would be but the natural consequence of the examples they have imitated, the instructions they have received, the principles they have imbibed, and the habits they have formed, while under the paternal roof.

On the other hand, if the parents endeavor to regulate their conduct and their household by the precepts of religion; if they are kindly attentive to each other's wishes and wants, mild and equable in their tempers, circumspect and amiable in their manners, true and candid and improving in their conversation; if they manifest the sympathies of an expansive benevolence, and exhibit the fruits of genuine goodness and unaffected piety;—if parental discipline and instruction be added to this worthy example; and their offspring are early taught to obey the dictates of their parents, their reason, and their Maker; if their risings of rebellious passion are checked and controlled; and they are aided in forming habits of truth, honesty, industry, self-government, and virtue; if they are assisted in cultivating cheerful, contented, generous, happy dispositions; if they are instructed to look upon the honors, emoluments, and pleasures of this world as uncertain, temporary and unsatisfying; and upon christian goodness as the one thing truly essential to their happiness in every period of their existence; if they are induced to believe that the religion of Jesus is a certain guide to peace, usefulness, respecta-

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bility, and salvation; and that God is their ever present, unfailing Friend and Father—thus educated by precept and example, they will be prepared for the evils that are in the world. And though they may leave the happy scenes of infancy and childhood with regret, they will soon secure the esteem of all who know them; they will be blessings to their friends and ornaments of society. And should they be greatly exposed to the influence of corrupting example, in the moment of strong temptation, if their early impressions, their virtuous habits, their christian principles will not save them from ruin, there is good hope they will be saved by the remembrance of a virtuous *home;* by the recollection of a brother's affectionate warnings, a father's agitated countenance, a sister's earnest entreaties, a fond mother's tears. If then we would have uninterrupted happiness in our family circle, we must cherish religion on the domestic altar. Her heavenly influence must purify our motives, refine our feelings, mould our dispositions, elevate our affections, dignify our conversation, and direct our conduct. Then we shall have felicity in our own bosoms, and the same blessing will rest upon our dependants and children.

B. W.

THE GOOD PASTOR OF WALDBACH.

[Compiled.]

In a wild, mountainous canton of Alsace, the Ban de la Roche, are five obscure villages, of which Waldbach is the principal. This place has acquired a moral interest far exceeding that which is ever inspired by the finest

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scenery, from the pure and beneficent ministry of the extraordinary man whose pious achievements will make the subject of this article.

John Frederic Oberlin, 'le bon papa Oberlin,' was first made publicly known by a small pamphlet of the Rev. Mark Wilks, of Paris. The Secretary of the British and Foreign Bible Society had indeed before alluded to him in honorable terms; and a letter written by himself appeared, without his name, in their First Report. At that period, Oberlin had been prosecuting for nearly forty years a series of the most arduous labors in the cause of virtue and humanity, in the recesses of mountains scarcely accessible to the traveller. He died about a year and a half ago, and has left in his life a striking evidence how much enviable usefulness may bless a station the most obscure.

At the time when the good father Oberlin became its pastor, the Ban de la Roche was in a condition inconceivably degraded. So deep was the ignorance which prevailed, that M. Stouber, who preceded Oberlin, and for a few years labored for their improvement, found the inhabitants unable to read. He had to begin his work by compiling a spelling-book, which with some difficulty he placed in the hands of the children; their parents being at a loss to understand its meaning and object, and suspecting some heresy or divination to lie hid among the unconnected syllables, long opposed the use of the book. On perceiving, however, that the young people were able to read any book in consequence of their lessons, the adults begged to be themselves taught. Stouber left them before this object had been securely accomplished, and they were in danger of relapsing into their former dark-

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ness. Nor was their condition in other respects less deplorable. Their houses were sunk in the sides of the mountains, were damp and therefore unhealthy, and afforded but a miserable shelter. They subsisted on potatoes chiefly, and for these they had no cellars, which in winter might preserve them from the frost. There were neither masons, smiths, joiners, glaziers, nor wheelwrights in the country. The various domestic manufactures, as spinning, knitting, weaving, were unknown. Having been long destitute of religious institutions their moral habits were debased, and they were almost as wild in their manners as barbarians.

To this degraded peasantry, Oberlin devoted his talents and his life, from his twenty-seventh year. He applied himself directly to the difficult task of meliorating their condition. To this end he perceived it to be first necessary to open some communication between them and other districts. The roads, if such they could be called, by which only they could reach the highway, were, most of the year, absolutely impassable, and, even in summer, were never used but on some extremely urgent occasion. The good pastor assembled his parish and explained to them his wishes. He proposed that they should open a new road, and throw a bridge across a torrent, which might enable them to communicate freely with adjacent districts. All were amazed. It was impossible. They declined the undertaking. In vain did Oberlin reason with them upon its importance, until seizing a pick-axe he exclaimed, "all who feel the importance of my proposal, come and work with me." His enthusiasm instantly spread. All ran for their tools and joined him. His plan being matured already, they began at once.

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And thus at the head of two hundred peasants did the zealous pastor toil, till at the end of two years, after overcoming the most disheartening obstacles, he saw his design successfully accomplished. Roads were afterward made to connect the several villages. Walls were built to prevent the soil on the declivities from being washed down by the mountain streams. And thus, by the energy of an individual, the first impulse was given, to improvements whose benefits are felt by a whole people.

Oberlin next selected a number of youths from among his parishioners, clothed them, and apprenticed them in the adjacent towns; and thus in a few years he had prepared good workmen in all the most important trades. He caused also a warehouse to be opened in which were deposited various utensils for farming, to be sold to his people at cost, with such credit as they needed. He instructed them to erect cottages instead of their miserable hovels, with good cellars, and properly furnished. He directed their attention to the improvements in agriculture which were most essential. By introducing a new method of cultivating the potato, and obtaining new seed from Germany and elsewhere, he augmented the resources of his people; and to his exertions they attributed their being saved, in some years of scarcity, from famine. As soon as he saw that they began to recognise the utility of his instructions, Oberlin formed a little Society among his more intelligent farmers, which he affiliated with that at Strasbourg; and the latter Society placed at his disposal, in 1805, the sum of two hundred francs, to be distributed in prizes to the peasants who had excelled in the care of their nurseries and fruit trees. He instituted a weekly lecture, for the young people, with

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a view to render these improvements permanent, in which he explained to them in a familiar way, the subjects of agriculture and general science, as well as religion. Not a year passed, in which some useful plans were not introduced and carried out; so that the rapid progress in civilization and prosperity of this once savage canton, was a subject of wonder in neighboring districts.

To provide employment for the increasing population of so confined a district, not one fourth of whom could be occupied in cultivation, Oberlin introduced various mechanic arts, and domestic manufactures. The reputation of their pastor, and the moral character of his parishioners, their intelligence, simplicity and integrity, induced M. le Grand to remove a manufactory of silk ribbons from the Upper Rhine to the Ban de la Roche. "The pleasure," says he, "of living in the midst of a little colony, whose manners are softened, and whose minds are enlightened by the instructions which they receive from their earliest infancy, compensates the privations of a valley separated from the rest of the world, by the mountains which surround it."

Education must, of course, have soon engaged the zealous cares of the good pastor. When he came there, but one wretched hut in the five villages was used as a school, nor were the peasants willing to hear of any other. Oberlin was poor, but he caused a building to be begun at his own risk, even securing his people against expense for repairs; and in no long time, they had a school-house in each village. He gathered the youngest children into spacious rooms hired and fitted at his own charge, and placed over them governesses who had been prepared by his own instructions for their task. Here

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was spent a happy infancy, in such amusements as were most suitable, and the acquisition of the simplest rudiments of learning. The pastor enjoined that only pure French should be used among these children, and thus nearly banished the *patois* from the canton.

When prepared the children were received into the public schools. Their religious instruction Oberlin reserved for himself. Every Sunday they were assembled at the church, and recited what they had learned, to their pastor, by whom they were tenderly admonished. During the week, another meeting was held, for the purpose of mutual improvement both of teachers and pupils. From benevolent friends Oberlin procured funds for a juvenile library, and to this he added an electrical machine, some other philosophical instruments, and a collection of plants. Useful works, some of which he himself printed, were made to perform the tour of all the schools yearly; and prizes were awarded to masters and scholars. Oberlin drew up an Almanac to take the place of the superstitious calendars then in use. In their summer walks he taught the children to search for the plants the names of which they had learned in winter. He encouraged a taste for flowers and gardening; and scholars of twelve years of age and upwards were required to write out and commit to memory lessons on agriculture and the care of trees, prepared for them by himself. He impressed on parents and children equally the importance of cultivating the earth, as a part of religion. And it was his custom to require a certificate of every youth who came to be confirmed, showing that he had planted in a described spot, two young fruit trees.

The influence which Oberlin gained over his pa-

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rishioners was almost unbounded. The most touching incidents are related in proof of this. For eighty years a litigation had existed between the peasants, and their *Seigneurs*, respecting the right of the forests which covered their mountains. Their pastor overcame the rooted animosities and selfish passions which had so long reigned unsubdued; and persuaded them to yield to an amicable overture at a considerable sacrifice. The mayors in deputation on the occasion, presented him with the pen with which the deed was signed, as a memorial of his noble conquest. Another instance deserves also to be mentioned. A young woman of Shirmeck, a Catholic, had married a peasant of Waldbach. The man had enemies, who hated him because he was richer than they. After the birth of a daughter, they proposed to go to Shirmeck, that it might be baptized by the Catholic priest. Just as they would have set off, it was told them that some persons had determined to intercept them at a particular place, and compel the husband to assent to an unjust claim. In their terror they sought Oberlin, who accompanied them to the spot, and there stopping a few moments he knelt with them in devotion. The men in ambush rushed out, but seeing their pastor were instantly checked by dismay. He approached them with the infant in his arms, and said with indignation, "there is the infant which has so much injured you,—which disturbs the peace of your days." The men confessed their guilt, begged pardon of the young couple, and returned with Oberlin to the village. On quitting them he said, "My children, remember the day of the mountain, if you wish I should forget it."

Oberlin was at one time the only physician of his

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parish, having studied medicine with a view to that benevolent object. He would often go to Strasbourg on errands of mercy for his people, and generally travelled by night lest he should be too long away. His activity was surprising. He would climb the steepest summits, and plunge through pathless snows, on a visit to the sick. He afterwards sent a young man to Strasbourg to be prepared for a physician and surgeon.

The style of preaching at Waldbach was adapted wholly to his own flock, but Oberlin generally wrote his sermons with great care and committed them to memory. The Sabbath afternoon was devoted to a catechetical exercise. On Friday he conducted a service in German for the benefit of such among his people as were most familiar with that language. These meetings were less numerous, and the good pastor laid aside all form, and made his address truly paternal. "The women listened to him while going on with their work; and, now and then, the pastor would pause and pass round his snuff box. When he had pursued a train of reflections to some length, he would ask, 'My children, are you not tired? have you heard enough?' To which they with the same simplicity replied, 'No, Papa, go on; we should like to hear a little more.' Or if he seemed fatigued, they would thank him and ask to be dismissed."

How excellent were the fruits of his ministry, there are such evidences as these. When a poor man now leaves an orphan family, his neighbors and relations distribute these children among them, adopting them for their own. The young men assist the old and the sick, by laboring for them after their own day's task is over. Is a cottage to be built? All help to procure the materials and put

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them together. Does a peasant lose his cow, his whole support? The parish club to get him another. The inhabitants of these mountains have become remarkable for their pure morals, active goodness, and simple piety. A respectable minister thus describes a Sabbath service at Waldbach. "We set off to attend the sermon. The village is on a rapid slope. The horse he was to ride was sent on to the bottom of the village, and we descended on foot. He shook hands with every child he met; several came forward towards him, and all were gladdened by his affability. 'Jesus,' he would often say, 'loved children.' He ascended on horseback about half a league further. His parishioners, collected near the church, formed a sort of lane, their hats off. Oberlin addressed them all as his children. All the *regents* came forward to shake hands with Papa. After sermon he administered baptism, holding the child in his arms; and he took occasion to remind the parents of their duty. Some rebukes he addressed to them, affected them extremely. He returned thanks for the result of a collection which had been made for a poor family: he offered up a prayer on their behalf, but he was unable to go through it. The emotion of all answered to his tears." Mr. Owen, speaking of a similar occasion, says, "the appearance of the congregation, their order and seriousness, with the fervor, tenderness, and simplicity with which their pastor addressed them, conveyed to my mind the impression of a sincere and elevated devotion." All which appears confirms this account of the improvement effected by Oberlin, on a people whom he found in an almost barbarous condition. Louis XVIII. conferred on him the decoration of the Legion of Honor in ac-

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knowledgment of his having been the author of the welfare of a whole population.

Oberlin did not confine his benevolence at home. He was one of the earliest friends and agents of the London Bible Society, on the continent. As soon as he learned there were missionaries he sold his family plate, to devote the avails to the enterprise. His people were accustomed to share in all such charities. At a time when many of various religious denominations fled from Strasbourg on account of persecution, they were all hospitably sheltered and generously provided for. He was beloved by the Catholics not less than the Protestants around him. Every harsh passion encountered his sure rebuke, every gentle emotion was inspired by his presence. The stranger who turned aside from the beaten route to visit the Ban de la Roche, went away deeply impressed by the enthusiastic goodness of its venerable pastor.

Oberlin died at the advanced age of eighty six. A monument worthy of his virtues is to be erected to his memory; this is none other than a charitable foundation, to bear his name, having for its object to provide for the physical and moral wants of the people to whom he gave his life; thus perpetuating, in the Ban de la Roche, the beneficent influence of its revered benefactor.

IMITATION FROM THE PERSIAN.

BY DR SOUTHEY.

LORD! who art merciful as well as just,
Incline thine ear to me, a child of dust!
Not what I would, O Lord! I offer thee,
Alas! but what I can.

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Father Almighty! who hast made me man,
And bade me look to Heaven, for thou art there,
Accept my sacrifice, and humble prayer.
Four things which are not in thy treasury,
I lay before thee, Lord! with this petition:
My nothingness, my wants,
My sins, and my contrition!

"GOD THE HOPE OF ALL BELIEVERS."

IMAGINE not, my friend, that altering your views respecting Jesus' nature, while you still receive and honor him as the Son of God and only Saviour, is shifting the ground of your christian hope. When you were a Trinitarian you thought your faith and hope were in God. Are they not now? Is not the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,—God? In him the Unitarian treasures up his hope. Is he less safe for that? What better security than God, has any man? Because you have ceased to think Jesus the Deity, have you no God to trust? Blessed Saviour! must we forget thy Father when we honor thee?

One thing alone gives all its value to redemption: Eternal Mercy. But for that, and the blood and righteousness of Christ, to which the Trinitarian cleaves as his only stay, would no more avail to human safety than the blood which the suicide spills, or the righteousness which the saint achieves. Eternal Mercy is a sinner's hope. On that we rely, be we Trinitarian or Unitarian in creed. Give me that and I am safe. Take that away and I must perish. Tell me not that the man who confides in the Father of our Lord Jesus is less secure than

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any other. If the Father cannot be trusted, what better is the Son? Be assured then, that you have a God interested to save you, as truly now, as when you supposed that he who died on Calvary was the Everlasting One. His love, who gave a Saviour, is surely sufficient for our salvation, our brethren themselves being judges.

Now, some may say, you cast off Christ, you hope to be saved without him, you do not want a Saviour any longer. Heed them not. You will have an answer in your heart. Let the Son of God be received there as he is offered in the Gospel, as he is described by John whom he loved so tenderly, as he himself has sought your affection in those precious words,—"Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Then will you be at no loss to know how much you need such a Saviour, nor how dear he must ever be to those who have "come unto God by him." He died that he *might* bring us unto God. And never yet did sinful man essay to return to his Creator, but he felt that he must have some one, better, and wiser, and stronger than himself or any fellow sinner, to guide his erring feet, cheer his desponding heart, support his trembling reason, sooth his upbraiding conscience, dispel the fears which guilt creates, and, parting asunder the clouds before the Throne, shew him the Father, and kneel with him at the mercy seat. We give *not* up our Advocate, though we may not adore him as our God. He is not dearer to those whose belief may raise him to a loftier height.

"Christ in you the hope of glory," says an apostle. What does he mean? Just what he meant when he said, "My little children, of whom I travail until Christ be *formed* in you." The image of Jesus impressed on the

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soul. His heavenly character become ours. The Christian virtues witnessing to our fidelity to him. These, it is, which inspire the hope of glory. When we have the same mind that was *in* Christ, he may indeed be said to be *in* us; and no longer than that spirit is our spirit can we have one hope of glory, which will not make ashamed or be confounded when God shall take us from the world.

AN ESSAY ON THE IMPORTANCE OF CONSIDERING THE SUBJECT OF RELIGION. Addressed particularly to men of Education. By John Foster, author of Essays on Decision of Character, &c. S. H. Parker, and Crocker & Brewster. Boston, 1827. pp. 172.

INFIRMITY of purpose, an unsettled state of opinion and feeling, and all the forms in which aversion to religion appears, have in this book a salutary corrective. The author takes his place beside you, as one who wishes to share your confidence, but has no design to act the part of a mere adviser. He comes to converse with you on terms of perfect equality, about a subject in which he and you are alike concerned. He is no master, but seeks to be acknowledged as a friend. He knows you are not what you ought to be, and tells you so, but in a way that shows you he is thinking only of your welfare, not of his own imagined superiority. Enlightened, liberal, wise, but solemn, uncompromising and urgent, he reasons closely, pleads heartily, and fixes in the mind a conviction that all he demands is right, and makes you own that it were most happy for you never to have rejected such counsel, if you have had it before, and most unpardonable, if it be now addressed for the first time to you, should you not be faithful in the application.

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We have never met with a book in which serious admonition was conveyed in language so perfectly suitable, and more free from what is called rant. You detect here no extravagant statements, no disposition to show hatred to sin by abusing the sinner, no complaining without cause, no tedious prosing about common-place things. Religion is represented only as it must always appear to us when conscience is true, and christianity is our guide. It is shown to be man's highest and most indispensable concern;—and is it not? Duty to God is raised above each mortal interest, and enforced as what *must* be attended to, without any more delay or remissness;—ought it not to be? Man's bliss or wo are here assumed to be the product of his own dispositions, desires, and conduct;—are they not? Eternal interests are exhibited in sure dependance on confirmed character;—and *dare* he whose guilt has here been his ruin, hope that hereafter it may prove less an obstacle to his happiness?

The Essay on Decision of Character, has been very generally admired. This work is marked by the same qualities of style and thought. Deeply imbued with a pious spirit, it is clear from all phraseology, which an unfortunate association may have rendered revolting. He who cannot read this appeal without being offended, must not blame the writer's taste, but his own heart.

The excellence of this book consists in its adaptation to the case of such as, from *any* cause, have not yet "yielded themselves unto God," nor have formed their plans of living upon christian principles, recognised by a deep conviction, and unreservedly applied to the heart, conversation, and pursuits, in every particular. Could

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we but persuade them, seriously to read that which this eloquent and pious writer has furnished for them, from the stores of a thorough knowledge of human nature, the world, and the Sacred Word, and which he has impressed with the seal of a charity so pure, and gentle, and forgiving, we shall have done them an unspeakable favor.

MORAL AND RELIGIOUS SOUVENIR. 1828. Boston. N. S. Simpkins & Co.

IT is a happy device to mark the first day of a new year by something intellectual, by gifts which address the taste, the imagination, and the heart, instead of such as are attractive to the senses only, or minister to the "pride of life." We cannot but rejoice in the importation of these mental luxuries, and are not sorry that our own writers and artists have so finely imitated the sumptuous works from abroad. But it needed only a glance at some of these last, to be convinced that beneath so much beauty and taste, lurked some things "not good for food," and others which might even cause disease to the mind which was captivated by their charming show. We esteem it therefore very fortunate that such volumes as the one before us, and the Juvenile Souvenir, are thus early thrown in among the rest, and doubt not that they will exert a salutary influence, at the moment of conferring a pleasure not inferior to that we could derive from any similar sources. The pieces are selected with great care, are as various as could be wished, and are presented in a neat and beautiful form. We hope these unobtrusive moral remembrancers will not fail to be as widely distributed as those which now shine so temptingly on every

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counter, and adorn with their splendor the parlors of the rich, the toilet of the fair, and the library of the man of letters.

[For the Unitarian Advocate.]

"GRIEVE NOT THY FATHER AS LONG AS HE LIVETH."

Son of Sirach.

THY Father!—Why with locks of snow
Are thus his sacred temples clad?
Why droops he o'er his staff so low,
With trembling limbs and visage sad?—
Care hath his brow with wrinkles scarr'd,
His clustering ringlets shred away,
And Time with frosty sceptre marr'd
The glory of his manhood's sway.

How oft that palsied hand hath led
Thy infant footsteps weak with fear,
How gently bow'd that reverend head
Thy childhood's broken tale to hear;
And when thy wayward feet have stray'd
Mid youthful follies wild and free,
Those lips invoked through midnight's shade
The pardon of thy God for thee.

If from his speech should dotage flow,
If eye or ear be dull and dead,
Thou, to his second childhood show
The care that smooth'd thy cradle-bed.
Grieve not thy Sire!—for if his love
Unblest or unrequited be,
He, whom thou call'st thy Sire above
Will bend a Judge's frown on thee. H.

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SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

DUTIES OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER.

Before we engage in any undertaking, it is necessary to understand the duties that will devolve upon us, in order to perform them with fidelity and correctness. The teachers in Sunday schools are frequently disheartened by failures which cannot be attributed to a want of zeal on their part, or of a desire to improve on that of their pupils. It is our intention to point out some of those duties, the failure of performing which occasionally, or an imperfect knowledge respecting them, may have contributed in a degree to this discouragement.

In the first place he who proposes to become a Sunday school teacher, should commence with clearly understanding what he is about to take upon himself. It is to impart religious instruction to the young. An important and interesting task. He should enter, therefore, on its performance with religious feeling, with a due sense of its importance, and of the ultimate end of his labors. He must begin by interesting his pupils and gaining their affection. He is to present religion and religious subjects in their true and proper light as far as he is able, and teach them to make it the governing principle of their lives. He is to consider himself not only their instructer on the Sabbath, but their friend and counsellor on all occasions and at all times; not merely to discover an interest in their happiness and improvement, during one day of the week, but to inspire them with the feeling of his constant, watchful care.

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It is important that the Sunday school teacher on commencing should prepare himself, and be thoroughly informed on the subjects of instruction, and the best manner of imparting such knowledge. However familiar his lessons may be, however easy the first simple truths of our religion may appear, he will soon find in beginning the task of teaching, that in order to render them permanent and produce the desired effects, they must be familiarly explained, and inculcated with a most minute definition, and with patient repetitions. An explanation that is not often so necessary, and a minuteness and care that can be understood only by such as realize the truth, that we all need "line upon line, and precept upon precept." These are essential in the most simple part of religious instruction; how much more in that which is very important,—when the character is forming, when the youthful mind is seeking for knowledge, and can be guided with ease by those to whom it is attached,—that period when, though it most eagerly seeks present good, and is interested in the things with which it is intimately connected, may yet be made to admire and adore above all things the unseen and eternal. How important it is that the teacher should understand what he is to explain to his pupils of that Word of life, the explanation of which may never be forgotten and may affect the character both here and hereafter. How important that the pupil, while called each day perhaps to witness some deviation from rectitude, or the influence of some temptation, should be able still "to approve the things which are excellent." And this can be done only by the teacher's embracing every opportunity for advancing his own mental improvement, which will enable him to render his

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instruction interesting and useful, and by ascertaining the peculiar character of each individual under his care, and adapting his language and manner to their comprehension.

The teacher should ascertain, if possible, the situation and character of his pupils, and aid the parents in their religious instruction. Visiting the parents we regard as an important part of the Sunday school teacher's duty. It is by this means that he is able to ascertain the situation of his pupils, which enables him to give the proper and necessary advice and instruction; that instruction which is not confined to the brief concerns of a single day, but will be felt by them through all the occurrences, enjoyments, and duties of life. It is in the faithful performance of this duty, that the children, ever heedful of what is done by their instructers, perceive the interest taken in their welfare; which at once gains their affection and confidence; leads them to lay open their hearts to him; and produces those grateful returns which are the source of his purest happiness. It is in the discharge of this duty that the sometimes harsh and discordant sounds of advice to the child by the fireside of its parent, are modulated and clothed with the gentleness of persuasion, which is listened to and welcomed to the heart, when the mild voice of the teacher repeats it again, and causes the resolution to observe it hereafter. It is in this act of duty also that the teacher is made to appreciate how many blessings he daily enjoys, and how much he is able to impart to others: blessings that inspire him with the desire to improve his talents and do all that he can to assist others. And in these friendly calls he has the best opportunities to aid the parents in

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guiding their children "in the way they should go," and he trusts by their united efforts that "when they are old they will not depart from it."

It is desirable that the teacher should form an acquaintance with those with whom he is associated. An opportunity for doing which is afforded him at the teachers' meetings. That these meetings are important is evident from the consideration, that the prosperity of the school depends greatly on them, as it is here that alterations and improvements are made, and consultation held among the teachers. And how is this to be done if part of the teachers only are present, and know what is to be carried into operation. No teacher should ever complain of any alterations made at these meetings if he considers attendance on them of no great importance, and therefore deprives himself of ascertaining why such alterations were made. Let all such teachers remember that the difficulty lies only with themselves, and that by attending them they would also be satisfied.

But this we trust is never the case when it is considered that there are higher objects in view and greater ends to be accomplished. It is at these meetings that aid and assistance is to be given to those who have but just commenced, and are not much acquainted with the manner of proceeding. It is here that friendship is formed among those who are of one mind, and have one common object in view. It is here that encouragements are offered, information given, and the spirits refreshed; which enables them to proceed in this good work. It is here, that by free and social intercourse, the mind is improved and the heart made better.

The teacher will not forget that *punctuality* is an

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important duty. The faithful performance of which indicates at once, interest, pleasure, and regard to duty. Interest in the school, pleasure in meeting his pupils, and regard to the force of example. Sufficient it is to say of this duty, that it is in vain we tell the children to come at the appointed hour, if they find not their teacher there to meet them. In vain we tell them of the pleasure and happiness enjoyed by attending the Sunday school, if they find us slow in coming there. In vain we recall to their minds their little hymn,

"The clock has struck, I must not stay,"

if when it shall have struck we are tardy. No—we must be found there when the clock strikes, and when the school should commence, and *then only* can we say that we are punctual.

I need but allude to the necessity of a correct example at all times. That silent but effectual method of impressing the young mind and of inducing it to love and admire our instruction, by witnessing its effects upon ourselves.

These are some of the duties of the Sunday school teacher. Say not that they are many and that you cannot give attention to them; that they are arduous and incur too great a responsibility, till you have considered the result of these exertions when faithfully applied. Tell me where can you learn more? where can you do more good? where is the field for greater usefulness? Tell me if you should accomplish but part of what you may in these schools, if you would not be amply rewarded for all the sacrifice and exertion it may cost you? If

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one child through your instrumentality should be turned from the path of evil—if one heart should be comforted by you—if one truth should be called to mind in after years, which you had imparted, and affect the life—if one solitary being should have sunk to rest in peace by your advice and consolation, say, would it not be a glorious reward? Oh, yes it would. If then to do good, to improve the talents given you by imparting them to others, is your desire, become a Sunday school teacher, and strive to perform every duty. If encouragement is needed, consider how much you have received, of which many of your fellow men are deprived. Carry back your mind to the days of *your* childhood and youth, when your infant tongue was first taught to lisp with all the care of maternal affection, the simple truths of our religion; when you were first taught to bend your infant knee in prayer, and direct your aspirations to a Being all perfect and benevolent; when with assiduous care was first sown in your tender mind those seeds of virtue which have been the source of such rich blessings to yourself and usefulness to others; to the time when your years of helplessness were watched with anxiety; when you were assisted to develope your infant faculties with untiring patience, and your welfare was consulted with unequalled solicitude. Carry back your mind to more advanced periods,—to those, which you have often enjoyed and are still frequently enjoying, when in retirement and meditation on the Word of truth, you have found that assistance which enabled you to go forth into the world, better prepared to overcome its temptations; when, like the Psalmist of old, you longed for the wings of a dove, that you might flee away and be at rest.

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Carry back your mind to these periods of your life, and meditate upon them *again*, and then come forth with the glorious sun on the morning of that day of sacred rest, and pour forth your gratitude, impart your pious feelings into the hearts of some of these little ones in the Sunday school, who through your instrumentality perhaps, may be trained not only for happiness here, but for never ending felicity beyond the grave. G.

SUNDAY SCHOOL ANECDOTE.

A PART of Dr Channing's Sermon, on "the Duties of Children," was read some time since in one of the Sunday schools in this city. The children generally seemed much impressed, and listened to it with attention. A short time after, a teacher in a visit to the parents of the children under her care, was informed by the mother of one of them that a very great change had been effected, as she trusted, in the character of her daughter. The girl had not formerly been strictly obedient to her parents. But, a few days after the reading of the sermon mentioned above, the mother remarked that she had been very dutiful, very prompt to perform all that she was desired to do,—that she had not once disobliged her for several days. She inquired the reason of this change. The girl replied,—"O, mother, last Sunday Mr —— read to us a sermon that told us how good our parents have been to us, how much they have done and are constantly doing for us; how they took care of us when we could not take care of ourselves,—and what we owed them in return for all this kindness and love, for all their

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endeavors to teach us to be good and to make us happy. And I determined, when I thought it over, after I got home, that I would never again grieve you by my ill conduct, that I would always try to obey you in all that you wished me to do, or not to do; for Mr —— told us, also, that our parents knew better what was right for us than we possibly could know ourselves."

I of course have not given a very exact relation of this circumstance; but it is correct in its general features; and is an encouragement to teachers to go on in their "labor of love." M.

Boston, Jan. 8th, 1828.

MODE OF INSTRUCTION.

[From the Rev. Dr. Parker's Address.]

With respect to the manner of administering instruction, permit me to remind you, that you have a most perfect pattern in the example of Christ. You have also in his practical character a most lovely exhibition of the nature of that goodness, which the gospel would produce. You behold him seizing every incident in life, and every object of nature, which could be advantageously employed, to give interest and impression to his teachings. He likewise employs in his inimitable parables a mode of instruction, which brings religious truth before men, clothed in a visible form. It is worthy of inquiry, whether the modes of preaching, adopted by the most exalted minds, are not defective, considered as the means of giving impression to religious truth. The truth may be stated, and this may be done plainly and forcibly; but is

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it not often done in a manner too purely intellectual? Do not individuals often fall into the same error in their modes of representing religious subjects to their own minds? I feel a strong persuasion, that we are so earthly in our nature, that in order to render the instructions of religion moving, we must give to them a form which will connect them with our senses and affections, as well as with our intellect. If we wish to represent impressively the character of God, we draw a picture of a parent, and contemplate the picture, rather than the abstract attributes of the Deity. The imagination and the affections are operated upon, and stimulate the understanding. The springs of moral action are touched. The same may be said of almost every subject of religious instruction. If this consideration be neglected, though our speculations may be very accurate and refined, our hearts will be cold and our lives barren. These remarks, if they have any force, apply particularly to instructions, given to children, whose habits are very intimately connected with their sensations, and whose minds are with difficulty made to receive truth in an unembodied form. Imitate, therefore, the impressive manner of the Teacher from heaven. Make the incidents of life, and the objects of nature administer assistance in impressing the truths of the gospel. Condescend to collect and occasionally to tell such incidents, as may have the same kind of effect, as had the Saviour's parables. You will thus not only give interest to your instructions; but you will connect religious impressions on the minds of the children with objects, and incidents most familiar to them; and make christian truth their daily bread, rather than a medicine occasionally to be administered.

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ORIGINAL MORAL TALES. Vols. I and II. Bowles & Dearborn. 1828.

IN the popular system of education the understanding is constantly employed while the heart is left vacant and the hands idle. This is particularly the case in the instruction of girls. There are too many young ladies among us who have been taught the common and even the higher branches of learning, and furnished with expensive and useless accomplishments, who enter upon the arduous duties of domestic life without a knowledge of the first principles of christian duty or even those elements of household management which are so essential to the happiness of the fireside.

Young men generally find the means of physical developement in active sports of their own, but they are too frequently brought up in the almost total neglect of moral education.

The series of tales before us is intended to furnish a means of remedying this important defect, and we know of none so admirably suited for the purpose. The writers appear to keep constantly in view the importance of preparing children for a faithful discharge of the active duties of life with a continual sense of their dependence on the Divine care and responsibility to the Divine Arbiter.

The shorter stories are told with the view of impressing some single important truth, or showing the propriety of some particular line of conduct. The longer ones inculcate the benefit of a good, or the ruin resulting from an evil course of behaviour. They are generally enough diversified with incidents to keep up a lively interest, and the style is characterized by that clearness and simplicity

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so absolutely necessary in books addressed to the young, and yet so frequently neglected by those who write professedly for their instruction. The characters introduced are usually in the middle station of life, although there are suitable exceptions to this rule, and the scene is almost invariably in our own country. American customs, institutions, habits and prepossessions are recognised; and the whole *costume*, to apply the word in its most enlarged sense, is native.

To many persons this last may seem a trivial consideration, but we confess, that to us it does not appear so. The English works for children, which we have hitherto been content to use exclusively, always have more or less of strangeness to the young American reader, from the circumstance that ranks, habits and opinions are continually presenting themselves, which are, and for ever must be, utterly foreign to us. In a book which is intended to furnish direct practical lessons of warning and example, this is no small deficiency. It must frequently impair, and sometimes entirely prevent their utility.

There are other considerations which render a large portion of the foreign juvenile publications which are continually republished here, utterly useless in a practical point of view. Society here is constituted on principles radically different from those which support the hereditary distinctions of England and France. The modes of education are not the same, and they ought to differ more than they do at present. Many abuses and absurdities received from the old world retain their places here through the influence of the books which we are so eager to republish, and many errors in moral and intellectual education, we have no hesitation in saying, are even

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gaining ground through the influence of juvenile books. The injury which is done in this country by the diffusion of juvenile books inculcating false doctrines in religion, to name no other subject, is incalculably great, and if not counteracted will be sensibly felt in society at some future day.

In these circumstances of the community, we cannot but regard it as peculiarly auspicious to the interests of virtue and religion, that a series of publications has been begun for the special purpose of supplying this acknowledged deficiency in our national literature, and furnishing an auxiliary to sound moral and intellectual education.

The tales in the first two volumes of the series are the productions of several writers, among whom we are happy to recognise the gifted author of "Evenings in New England," whose success in what is generally considered a higher effort of genius, does not prevent her from devoting a portion of her valuable time to the improvement of the young of her own sex. "Emily Parker," the only tale in these volumes from her pen, furnishes an invaluable lesson for young ladies who have arrived at that susceptible age when the character is forming, and when the momentous question is to be determined, whether decision of purpose shall be its governing principle, or it shall become the sport of fashion and surrounding examples and circumstances. "Sophia Morton" is the production of another writer, whose talents for this species of writing are certainly of a high order. It is written with uncommon spirit. The dialogue is well supported, and perfectly natural, and the necessity of industrious and careful attention to the common domestic duties could scarcely be more forcibly illustrated than by the incidents which it so

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strikingly relates. "Self Conquest" is one of the best moral tales we have seen. The lesson which it inculcates is indicated by the title. The story is interesting and the style perfectly suited to the class of readers for whom the story is intended.

The shorter stories are characterized by a certain *naiveté* in the style of narrative, which is peculiarly taking with children, and cannot fail to bring the religious instruction which they contain, home to their readers' hearts.

We hope the writers, who contribute to this series of tales, will continue to study the philosophy of mind, not in books merely, but in the actions and language of children in their unguarded and playful moments, as the most celebrated painters have studied their bright faces, unscathed by passion, when about to attempt the delineation of celestial purity and innocence. This practice will disclose the usual current of their ideas, and the avenues to their affections, and while it will direct to the most effective means of religious instruction, it will impart to the style, an ingenuousness and ease which cannot fail to win its way to all hearts.

We cordially recommend the whole series to parents, and more particularly to those who are forming parish and Sunday school libraries.

INTELLIGENCE.

Sabbath Schools.—The number of Sabbath Schools in connexion with the American Sunday School Union, is 2,600. These are taught by 24,307 teachers, and contain 174,191 scholars.

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Income of Benevolent Societies.—American Sunday School Union (including $14,000 for the Society's house,) 42,000 00
American Education Society, (of which $23,446 87 to permanent fund,) 38,347 27
American Tract Society, New York, 30,413 01
American Home Missionary Society, 18,140 76
American Colonization Society, 15,963 87
American Tract Society, Boston, $10,205 40, of which $5,640 99 were paid to the Society at New York, balance, 4,664 41
Presbyterian Education Society, about 8,000 00
Missionary Society of Connecticut, 6,215 65
Reformed Dutch Missionary Society, 3,528 24
Western Domestic Missionary Society, 2,577 68
Prison Discipline Society, 2,238 18

Receipts in the year terminating in 1827, $236,853 20
Receipts in the year previous, 130,623 50

Increase of receipts, $106,229 70

Lectures on Palestine.—Rev. Henry Ware, Jr. of this city, proposes to deliver a course of Lectures, on the Geography and Antiquities of the Bible, illustrated with Maps—His object is to do something for the encouragement of the Theological School at Cambridge—The whole profits of the course will be devoted towards laying the foundation of a Scholarship in that Institution.

The Lectures will be given at the Hall of the Atheneum, on Thursday Evenings.

Hanover Street Church.—A pamphlet has recently been published in this city, entitled "The recent Attempt to defeat the Constitutional Provisions in Favor of Religious Freedom, considered in Reference to the Trust Conveyances of the Hanover street Church; by a Layman."—We refrain at this time from making any further remarks upon this pamphlet, than merely stating our conviction that it places in their proper light the means which have been resorted to, through the medium of the "trust conveyances," in Hanover Street Church, of *restraining religious liberty.*—We hope an extensive circulation of this pamphlet will enable the public to become fully acquainted with every thing in relation to the matter.

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To enable our readers to judge something of the nature of these "trust conveyances," we make the following "Extract from the Trust Deed."

"This Indenture, of three parts, made this 15th day of March in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and twenty-six, &c.

"*Whereas* a Church of Christ has been gathered, called *Hanover Church*, the male members of which now in this city, are the parties of the third part hereof; *and whereas* it is intended, by the members of said Church, to maintain in the said House the Public worship of God, under such Protestant Congregational or Presbyterian Minister of the Gospel of Christ, as the male members of said Church shall from time to time elect, independently and exclusively of such persons as may at any time form a part of the Congregation usually worshipping in said House, although such persons may be proprietors of Pews therein; to the end that by the blessing of Almighty God, *a succession of holy persons may be elected Pastors of said Church, and the faithful preaching of Christ crucified, agreeably to the general system of Doctrines expressed in the Westminster Assembly's Shorter Catechism, and in the Confession of Faith, owned and consented to by the Elders and Messengers of the Churches, assembled at Boston, May 12th, A. D.* 1680, to be continued in the said House to the latest generations; *and whereas*, after deliberation, it has been thought advisable that the fee in said House and Land should be vested in and held by a number of persons, members of sister Orthodox Churches, in Trust for the said Church of Christ gathered as aforesaid, and for the more perfect protection thereof, according to human judgment."

Then follows a covenant that they are free from incumbrances;—the purposes and trusts for which the sale and conveyances are made;—the incumbrances, restrictions and reservations. We extract the following—

"It being well understood that *no proprietors of Pews, who are not members of the said Church, shall ever have a voice, or be allowed to take any part, or to act in the said business, or in the choice of a Pastor, either directly or indirectly*, and that their title and right, interest and property, in their Pews, shall *ever be subject* to these incumbrances, restrictions and reservations."

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"*The Unitarian.*"—A publication with this title is begun at New York. It will appear at irregular intervals in the winter season. The numbers already published are of the highest merit. We think it a work well adapted to diffuse a correct knowledge of our faith, and do away those prejudices which so strongly oppose its promulgation. It is sold at a price so low that those who buy for distribution, can find nothing better for their purpose. We earnestly wish it success.

Troubles at Andover.—An unhappy jealousy and variance has long subsisted between the Associate Professors of Andover Seminary, and the Rev. Dr Murdock, the Professor of Ecclesiastical History. A meeting was held by the Trustees on December 18th, which resulted in Dr Murdock's suspension from office, under various charges relating, not to his character, but his capacity and conduct as a Professor in the Institution. He was allowed no Council, and no compensation for the injury sustained by his removal. He has appealed to the Board of Visiters and to the Laws. Nearly all the students remonstrated in his favor.

Missions.—The annual expenditure for missions to the heathen is stated by the Missionary Herald to be not far from *one hundred and thirty thousand dollars.* The expenses of the Am. Board for For. Miss. exceeded their receipts, the last year, by more than *sixteen thousand dollars.*

New Society in Providence.—A new Unitarian Society has been gathered in Providence, R. I. which assembles for the present in a church in Richmond street. We understand another building will be soon erected for their use.

Dedications.—The Meeting House recently erected at the south part of this city, was dedicated to the worship of God on Wednesday the 30th ult. The services were as follows: Introductory prayer by Rev. Mr Young; selection from the scriptures by Rev. Mr Frothingham; Sermon by Rev. Henry Ware, Jr.; dedicatory prayer by Rev. Mr Pierpont; and concluding prayer by Rev. Mr Gannett.

The Unitarian Church in Augusta, Geo. was dedicated Dec. 27. Services by Rev. Mr Gilman, of Charleston, S. C. and Rev. Mr Briggs, of Lexington, Mass. The Sermon by Mr Gilman made a deep impression. A large part of the pews were immediately taken up.

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THE

UNITARIAN ADVOCATE.

VOL. I. MARCH, 1828. No. III.

THE PROPER UNITY OF JESUS.

[Continued from page 70.]

ON the scheme of a double nature in our Lord, it is impossible to prove any thing whatever by any declarations he has made respecting himself, or which the sacred writers have made concerning him. The same propositions are thus both true and false at the same time. Even if Jesus in the most solemn manner had disclaimed divinity, saying in terms "I am not God," the Trinitarian could still, with equal propriety as now, reply that the denial respected solely his humanity, which is indeed not divine. For, just consider, how near the language of Jesus on many occasions actually does come, to such a denial. "I live *by* the Father." But God is self-existent and independent. "The Son can do nothing of himself." All things are possible with God. "The glory which thou gavest me, I have given them," saith Jesus in his prayer to the Father. "My glory will I *not* give to another," saith God. But why should we multiply quotations? There is not one attribute peculiar to the Supreme Being which his Son did not plainly disclaim; not qualifying

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his disclaimer by adding, 'this I speak as a man,' but expressing himself in such terms as he must have employed, had he designed to make his denial positive and universal. "*All things whatsoever thou hast given me, are of thee.*" "*My Father is greater than all;—is greater than I.*" Can language be more decided?

We proceed now with the course of remarks begun in our last number. We there stated that numerous instances occur, of passages in which Christ speaks, or is spoken of, in his highest character, and in his whole person, yet so as to denote his subjection to a higher power, and dependence on another's will. The two first which we select are put together, though not uttered at the same time, because they are both alike in their bearing upon the present question, and both strikingly shew the fallacy of the theory of a double nature.

On a certain occasion, James and John with their mother came to Jesus "worshipping him," and desiring that he would grant them "to sit, one on his right hand, and the other on his left, in his kingdom." He replied "To sit on my right hand and on my left *is not mine* to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father." Again, when the disciples were assembled in the place from whence he ascended, they asked him, saying, "Lord wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" He answered, "It is not for you to know the times and the seasons which the Father hath put in *his own* power." These answers are precisely such as Christ must have made, were he only what we believe him to have been. But if he were indeed God, they are irreconcileable with his character, and without any explanation which can make them consistent with truth and propriety,

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as far as we can see. Is it said that Jesus spoke only as a man on these occasions? We rejoin, by observing that it was not to him as a human being, their friend and associate, but to him *as the Christ*, that the questions were addressed. He knew this. They had no expectations from him of the kind implied here, but as they believed him to be the Messiah. They would apply his answer to his official character. They must have understood him to say, that as the Christ even, he had no power of himself to confer dignities on his adherents, and that the Father only knew the time when the kingdom should be restored to Israel. His answers, then, left them in a very important mistake about his power and authority as their Lord and Saviour, if he were equal to the Father. Certainly there was no reason why he should, a few moments only before his ascension, use such language as naturally led those he addressed, the whole company of Apostles, to conceive of his knowledge and power as limited and inferior to the divine, in case he was divine. It was immediately to become their duty, if it was not then, to adore him as God. But his last words to them, if they have any meaning, tend to impress the idea that his Father was *alone* acquainted with the period of an event, to them unspeakably interesting. Suppose their curiosity to have merited a rebuke, or needed to be checked. Yet could Jesus not have done this without also deceiving them, leaving them not only ignorant, but very seriously mistaken; and that on a point so essential as his own power and divinity? It must not be pretended that by "the Father" here, our Lord designs God, without the Trinitarian distinctions. He had uniformly employed that term to denote God as distinguished from "the Son."

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A little while before he had said "I ascend unto my Father and your Father,—my God and your God." His actual ascension at that moment would remind them of these words, and we think the Apostles must necessarily have understood the same being and person, by the Father, in each instance.

In the first Epistle to the Corinthians, 15th chapter, at the 24th verse, we read as follows: "Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power; for he hath put all things under his feet; but—it is manifest he is excepted, which *did put* all things under him: and when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all." It is plain that Christ is here spoken of in his highest character, that which he retains while seated at the right hand of the Majesty on high. Compare Ephesians i. 15—23, and Philippians ii. 8—11. But he is also as clearly distinguished from God who gave him his dominion as a reward for his obedience unto death, and is represented as even in his kingdom a subject to his Father; to whom at last he shall deliver up his own sceptre; precisely as a vicegerent under a human sovereign, returns to his subjection, when his appointed term of dominion has expired.

How are such passages as those just cited, explained by Trinitarians? The Rev. Mr Cornelius observes, in his sermon on the Trinity, that "Christ in his complex character of *God and man*, is invested by his Father with the office of Mediator, and is said to receive from him a kingdom and authority to govern the universe."

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See page 31. Professor Storr speaks of Christ's "*relinquishing* for a season the enjoyment of the dignity of his nature;—*purchasing* to himself the right and power to avail himself *of his greatness* in the salvation of his brethren;—which salvation was the reward of his obedience, but because in consequence of his original union with the Godhead he was incapable of any increase of personal happiness, it could be conferred on us." *See Biblical Theology*, 2*d vol. pp.* 171, 189. Professor Stuart asks, "Why may not he have *veiled* his glories for a time in the incarnate Saviour?" And again he remarks, "He who was in the condition of God, and equal with God, made himself of no reputation." Once more he inquires, "Is it still a matter of wonder, that the same person could at one time be called God and have everlasting dominion ascribed to him, who the next moment calls Jehovah *his* God?"—*Letters to Channing*, 2*d ed. pp.* 85 *and* 97.

To these sentiments we may reasonably object, and the objection can never be removed, that God *cannot* veil his perfections, in the sense of not fully exercising them. He is as incapable of relinquishing his dignity for a season, as of ceasing, a little while, to be divine. Wherever God is, incarnate or purely spiritual, he must be in the full exercise of all his perfections every moment; for every moment a universe hangs suspended on him, and requires his *ceaseless* energy to preserve it in being. If God was so united to Jesus as to make one person with him, then was Jesus always possessed of absolute perfection, he could neither need nor receive any thing, and it is idle to talk of his being invested with dominion, put into the office of Governor of the universe,

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purchasing a right and a power to avail himself of his greatness, when, by his very nature and being, he had already entire sovereignty and indefeasible right to the throne of the universe. We may not say,—God divested himself of his attributes;—nor ought we to say,—God was invested with a part or the whole of what those attributes imply. Does any man really believe that the immutable Deity *could* "humble himself" to a condition lower than divine? It is impossible. And therefore Christ, who *did* humble himself to the condition of a common and a very poor man, could never have been the same person who has said, "I am the Lord, I change not."

Mr Stuart has remarked that "when necessary, power and authority infinitely above human, were displayed; when otherwise, the human nature, (of Christ,) sympathized and suffered like that of other men."—p. 49. J. P. Smith, D. D. says that whatever communication of supernatural qualities, powers, or enjoyments was made by the indwelling Divinity to the man Christ Jesus, was made in various degrees, and on successive occasions." *Scripture Testimony of the Messiah, vol.* 2, *p.* 340. Now what does this imply, but that there were *some* intervals when Christ was *not* divine, that it was only when *necessary* that he was God, being at all other times like other men. For if it mean that Christ was always God, though he did not always put forth the energy or exhibit the knowledge and wisdom he possessed, we must inquire how long the universe could subsist while its Preserver was thus lying by in a state of partial inactivity? On the other hand, how can a person remain always the same, and yet at intervals have only a part of the power and wisdom he at other times exercises; how

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can the same being be God to-day and only man to-morrow? Let not the supposed *personal identity* of God and Jesus be lost sight of, and then say if the same person can now agonize as a sufferer and a moment hence be incapable of suffering; or if the same person can suffer and not be capable of suffering at one and the same time? Either there is a "personal oneness" between deity and humanity, or there is not. If there is, then that, which is essential to constitute a person, as consciousness, will, &c. must be common to both, just as all other persons have an individual consciousness, one will, &c. In that case there can nothing happen to the complex person *God-man*, of which the *whole* person shall not be alike and at one time conscious. But if the personality of the Mediator be such, that there is a distinct consciousness to the human part, and a distinct consciousness to the divine part of the person, two separate minds and wills, where is the difference between such a person, so constituted, and two different persons, two separate beings? The union is no union where there is no participation, where one part may even die and the other not be conscious of it. There is left us then, no more than what every Unitarian admits, that God dwelt in the man Jesus, in such a manner, as that when necessary, divine power and wisdom were manifested through his agency. A personal oneness without a common consciousness is impossible. But a common consciousness would imply that the divine part felt what the human endured. This could not be. There remains only the supposition that God and Jesus had two consciousnesses, in other words two minds; and what more would there be wanting to make them two distinct intelligences,—two separate beings?

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The doctrine of a double nature in Christ, assumes that whatever was done by him properly divine, was done by that part of himself which was divine, in other words, by "*God the Son*," the second distinction in the Trinity. It is never pretended that the other distinctions were in personal union with a man. The Father did not become incarnate, nor the Holy Spirit. It was the Son, "God the Word," who became man. *See Bibl. Theol. 2d vol. p.* 154. Now our Lord expressly declares that his miracles were done by the Father. The Son, he also declares, can do nothing of himself. Throughout the New Testament there is no instance in which Christ's works, or doctrine are attributed to any other than the Father. How is this? Was it necessary, notwithstanding his personal oneness with the second person in the Trinity, that the Father should empower him, teach him, sustain him? Was it necessary that the Spirit should be poured out upon him at his baptism, when the Deity in person was so united to him as to constitute one and the same being with him? Was it necessary for the Father to send him aid and comfort during his agony in the garden, if that God to whom he then prayed, and who, he feared, had forsaken him, was even then part of his own person?

In humble prayer, our blessed Lord once exclaimed "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth!" "Father, glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee." And Paul says of himself, "I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." The Apostles Peter and John in a prayer recorded at length, express themselves thus: "Lord *thou* art God, who hast made heaven and earth, the sea and all that in them is;—against *thy holy servant* Jesus, both Herod and Pontius Pilate with the

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Gentiles and the whole people of Israel, were gathered together." All men are also taught when they pray, to address the Father, being assured that the true worshippers worship the Father. But Trinitarians affirm, that Jesus is Lord of Heaven and Earth. "He is now in heaven, where he will eternally exercise the privilege of governing all things by divine power." *Bibl. Theol. p.* 175, *2d Vol.* "When Christ is presented as sitting at the right hand of God, the meaning is, that he is participating in divine sovereignty." *Morus' Dissert. de Discrim. sensus.* But do the Scriptures warrant this? He who sitteth at the right hand of God is one who was raised from the dead, and who hath declared, "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit *with* me on my throne, even as I also overcome and am set down with my Father on his throne. To him will I give power, even as I received of my Father." Shall we say that he who ruleth the universe was once a dead man in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea? Shall we say that this dominion is of the nature of a *privilege* to be won by obedience as was the glory of Christ, and to be *shared* among several? If the Mediator be the only Potentate, his person includes not the Father or Spirit, and where then are they to have dominion? Are they too subject to the Son?

That dominion which Jesus indeed possesses is of another kind; his throne is *not* that of the universe. It is a dominion over the spiritual society, the Church, composed of "*all things which he hath reconciled* unto the Father, whether they be things in heaven, or things on earth, and *you* who were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works." *Colossians* i. 20, 21, and context. Compare also *chap.* ii. 10, 15, *and Ephes.* i. 10. ii. 5, 6, 10. iii. 9, 10.

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We have room for little more. But may we not ask, what advantage is gained by the theory of a double nature? Does it make Jesus a teacher more worthy of our reliance? No. He whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God. Jesus says of himself, ye seek to kill me, *a man* that hath told you the truth which I have heard of God. The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life. He that is of God heareth God's words. As the Father hath taught me, even so I speak.—All this Unitarians receive, and they feel that Jesus has all the claims of a divine teacher and messenger, and is to be obeyed as implicitly as if he were God himself, personally instructing mankind. What more than *divine* authority *can* his doctrines have? Do we gain any thing to our Lord's character by this theory. Surely not. For we look up to him as a sinless being, a spotless example of the highest possible virtue;—can our brethren regard him as more perfect? Are the miracles of Jesus diminished in consequence by those who deny the double nature? What are they on *any* hypothesis, but works of a divine power, and evidences of a divine commission? Our Lord's miracles were none the less important because God wrought them *by* him instead of their being wrought by him, being God. The resurrection, judgment, and retributory state are in like manner unaffected by this theory of two natures. It is really a matter quite unimportant whether we adopt or reject it, so far as these are concerned. Accordingly, Trinitarians found its whole importance upon its relation to the death of Jesus, and to divine worship. And even here, can any man deny that he who 'when he prayeth' says 'Our Father' is addressing the true object? Or will any one pretend that he

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who so believeth that Christ died for our sins, as himself to die unto sin and live ever after unto God, has believed in vain?—Besides, it is allowed by Trinitarians that they cannot define wherein that union consists. If so, can they be *sure*, after all, that it *is* such as makes personal oneness? They do not know that it is *more* than a union *without* identity, for they do not know at all in *what* it consists. No matter for the word "union," while we are ignorant of the thing for which it stands. Neither if we use it are we the better, nor if we reject it are we the worse.

RIGHT METHOD OF INQUIRY IN RELIGION.

When we are sufficiently impressed with the importance of having some fixed notions of religious belief, conscience next lays upon us her injunctions in regard to the spirit and temper in which we are to conduct our inquiries. That we may the better retain her dictates in our minds, we shall endeavor to embrace them under three principal ones. A fair and unbiassed state of mind;—a proper sense of our own weakness and liability to error;—and a firm though modest reliance on our own understanding, as the guide and counsellor given us by God;—comprise perhaps the most important requisites for a right and conscientious course of religious inquiry.

A fair and unbiassed state of mind, one of the rarest endowments of a christian character, is also one of the best marks of a strong and well-regulated understanding. It is accompanied and characterized by a supreme regard to truth, as the most desirable of all good. It holds the balance with an unshaken hand, amidst contending opin-

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ions. Evidence, place itself in which scale it will, is acceptable to it. Such a mind regards any opinion as valuable, and holds it dear, simply because it is true, and not because it was taught in early life, or because it is held by the greater part of society, or by respectable men. It is at any time ready to examine its opinions anew, knowing that truth never alters; and desirous, if any error has been received and cherished as truth, at once to abandon it. Such a mind possesses not that pride of intellect which assures itself of its own infallibility by never changing. It has overcome, if it ever felt that pride of opinion, or that weakness of mind, which cannot face the charge of instability.

We are not dreaming of the perfection of human nature. We do not expect that such an imperfect creature as man is, will ever bring his mind to be absolutely unbiassed, and open to all truth. But it certainly is not too much to require that he should be continually endeavoring to attain to such a state. All men profess a devout attachment to the truth; but how few have the marks of a fair mind. This professed attachment to the truth too often means only an attachment to their own opinions. For how few are they, who do not shrink from having them examined when they imagine there is danger of their being obliged to renounce them. They love to hear their opinions supported; but are glad to escape from seeing them fairly scrutinized.

There are often indeed great allowances to be made for the absence of this christian grace. Unfairness of mind, prejudice and bigotry are more often the children of ignorance than of sin. Allow what we may for others however, for ourselves let us claim no indulgence, but constantly aim to attain to the perfection of this virtue.

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From several causes, we are prone to become attached and wedded to our opinions for other reasons than their being true and valuable. In the infancy of our reason we naturally imbibe and cherish the religious views of our parents, instructers, and others whom we have learned to revere. At a maturer period, we naturally feel a great fondness for opinions and principles which have had undisturbed possession of our minds longer than we can remember. We are also very apt to become attached to opinions which we hold in common with other men. There arises a sympathy in the breasts of those who think alike, which not only places each higher in the estimation of the rest, but strengthens their united conviction of the truth, value, and importance of their common sentiments. Men, who thus have a community of belief, soon come to feel a common interest in defending it. Each one considers himself the champion, not so much of the truth, as of the faith of his party;—he sees the frown that is to meet him if he abandons the common cause;—he sees the smile that is to reward him if he adheres to it;—and under such influences, where is the room for fairness of mind or openness to the truth? These circumstances are not peculiar to any set of opinions, or to any class of christians. They belong to us all, as imperfect creatures. We have to acknowledge that they who hold to our own views are as liable as any others to this illiberal and party attachment to their own sentiments and to each other. In proportion however as we are sensible of our danger, let us be anxious to guard against it, by constantly aiming to be influenced by a spirit of candor, meekness, and love of the truth in its simplicity.

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The next quality of a right spirit for religious inquiry is an humble sense of our weakness and liability to error. Humility and modesty well become such creatures as we are. Being really weak and exposed to error, if we imagine ourselves neither one nor the other, and act on that imagination, we only render ourselves ten-fold more weak and exposed to error than we are naturally; whereas a proper sense of these defects might teach us caution and patience in managing our faculties. Some people apprehend that a too humble estimation of a man's self might sink him into such dejection and utter hopelessness, as would unnerve his stoutest efforts. But a *too* humble estimation of ourselves we do not ask for; and if nothing more is meant by this expression than a just sense of our native weakness and liability to error, we think it would not produce the dreadful effect. Humility is not despair; and modesty is not the undervaluing one's self. Despair, on the contrary, is commonly the child of disappointed pride; and a disposition to undervalue ourselves savors much more of vanity than of modesty. Our natural weakness and liability to mistake, at the worst, exist not in that degree that should lead us to abjectness or indifference in regard to the use that we make of our faculties. It must be something else than real humility, and a modest estimation of himself, that can palsy the efforts of any man.

The proper effect of a just sense of our weakness and liability to error is, as we have said, to teach us the necessity of caution and patience in the use we make of our faculties. There may be men of strong minds, who have little feeling of these defects of their own nature, and therefore have little of that carefulness and modesty

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which such humiliating facts are meant to teach. But whatever credit the world may give such persons for ingenuity and power of mind, they cannot receive from their consciences that high praise, which would be a source of richer satisfaction than the world can give, and would continue long after the world shall have ceased to be;—the high praise of having used rightly their reasoning powers; which not always belongs to the clearest or the profoundest reasoner, but to the man of the fairest and most unbiassed mind, of the greatest openness to the truth,—to the man of the most caution and modesty in his inquiries. A clear and profound mind shows us that nature has done much for the man. A fair and ingenuous mind, wary and distrustful of itself, indicates that by the grace of God he has done much for himself. The world bestows its praises on the former; God adjudges the reward to the latter.

Another, and the last quality we have to consider of the spirit proper for religious inquiries is a firm though modest reliance on this guide and counsellor given us by God, notwithstanding it cannot claim to be a perfect guide nor an unerring counsellor.

It is not a perfect guide; but it is the best and indeed the only one we have. God gave it to us for our use, and it is right we should trust in it and follow it. Let us remember too that He, who gave man a feeble guide, can, when he pleases, assist its weakness. He has done so by the revelation of his will. He will do so further to those who ask his aid in sincerity, by the imperceptible influence of his good spirit. But still we have not a new and a different guide; it is still reason that we follow, though, by the goodness of God, exceedingly raised and improved in its character. It is to be lamented that the vanity

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and credulity of some men, by filling them with a notion of their being the favorites of heaven, and gifted with supernatural light, should have led them to undervalue and despise their natural reason, and even to treat it as the *enemy* of revelation. It is hardly less to be regretted that other men, pretending to reverence this faculty almost to deification, have yet proceeded in their inquiries with so much boldness and precipitation as to increase the outcry which has been raised against the use of our own understandings and common sense in religious inquiries. The vanity and credulity of the one class, and the carelessness, boldness and precipitation of the other, are equally to be avoided as injurious to the cause of truth and piety. If we are in earnest seeking for truth, we may learn wisdom in the use we are to make of our faculties from both these descriptions of men. Convinced that the fanatic, who abandons his reason, and the careless or rash man, who abuses his, while he seems to honor it, are neither of them fast friends to the truth, we should be taught by the former, never to slight or think meanly of the understanding our Creator has given us for the attainment of truth, and by the latter, never to use it boldly or carelessly. When its light fails us, we must stop in our inquiries; but not distrust it when its light is sufficient. He, who gave us the faculty, never intended it should, at least in this life, guide us into all truth. Yet on subjects of importance to us to be acquainted with, there is no reason to fear that in the modest, guarded use of it, which conscience enjoins, it will either mislead us, or leave us in darkness.

We must therefore determine to follow reason, as the lamp of God within us, not indeed with boldness, but

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with caution;—because, though it is the best light we have, it is not so bright or so safe that we can walk by it, in security from error, without care and anxiety. We must follow it with trembling steps, and a prayerful spirit, but still follow it. We must follow it with a modest disposition, and an humble sense of our weakness and liability to err, but still follow it. It must be our guide in examining the scriptures in reference to the doctrines they teach, and the duties they inculcate; and when its light ceases, we must be contented to remain in the dark.

We would seek the middle path between too much and too little confidence in our faculties. We condemn boldness in the use of them, as if they could never lead us wrong in religious inquiries, but still do not recommend a total distrust of them, as if they could never carry us right. Our natural weakness and exposure to error, and the rashness of others, as we have said, enjoin upon us caution and watchfulness and dependence on God, in our researches; but not a timid shrinking from the whole duty of religious inquiry.

The whole protestant world have separated themselves from the Romish communion on the ground of the right of private judgment. But how this right is to be exercised, we should rather say this duty performed, except by the use of our understandings, we are at a loss to determine. Yet there are many pious, though not very consistent protestants, who start at the suggestion of bringing human reason to sit in judgment on the meaning of the Holy Scriptures. But without this faculty to judge of the evidences of revealed religion, we could never have known that we have in these writings a revelation from God. Besides, if we give up our own reason or judgment in exam-

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ining the records of revealed truth, what have we left with which to investigate them. It has been well said that when God speaks to his creatures he does it in language that they can understand. Indeed it seems but a mockery to say that any thing is revealed, that is, unfolded, made clear, which still cannot be understood.

It must be admitted on all hands, that many parts of the scriptures are obscure, especially to the unlearned reader. There are some passages expressed very strongly, which, taken literally, seem irreconcilable with the great, broad principles that run through the rest of the volume. There are many other sources of difficulty in understanding the sacred writings, more or less removable by careful and patient investigation. But if the difficulties were more numerous and formidable than they are, we ought to remember that they belong not intrinsically to the sacred books;—that when these were first written, they probably contained nothing irreconcilable or difficult;—that in the lapse of many ages, it was to be expected that much absurdity should gather about such compositions;—and that we may hope it will gradually disappear, as men, in the unbiassed, the circumspect, yet steady and persevering use of their reason, apply to the investigation of the scriptures, the simple rules by which they determine the meaning of all other books. After all, should many serious difficulties remain, as it would be too much to hope there will not, after our most unwearied and careful examination of holy writ, we may cheerfully suspend our judgment on such points, until God, either here or hereafter, vouchsafes us clearer light in regard to them.

It is sometimes laid to the charge of those who advocate the use of reason in religious researches, that they wrest,

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and torture, and explain away the scriptures, in order to make them speak the language of their favorite system. If there is any foundation for this remark, they have the misfortune to fail in the very point they are zealous in urging and defending. It certainly is not reason; it is prejudice, self-opinion, pride of intellect, a bad heart,—it is any thing rather than the cautious though decided use of the truth-exploring faculty given us by God, that prompts to such a course. Reason, on the contrary, would teach us that in regard to the Holy Scripture, it is our most edifying and most comfortable duty to dwell upon what is plain and obvious; and as to what, after deliberate and prayerful inquiry, we cannot understand, to think no longer about it, but to remain contented with the ignorance which is unavoidable. Some persons seem to have an ambition of knowing every thing, and being able to solve every difficulty. There are others who consider every thing they cannot understand as a mystery rendered sacred and venerable by being unintelligible. They take comfort in seeking out and contemplating such passages. But the humble inquirer, who realizes that a revelation was given to the world to regenerate and sanctify it, loves to search for that plain, practical truth which he *knows* is profitable to godliness, by its enforcing duty upon his mind with the most effective sanctions, by its rendering him more capable of a life of self-denial, and by its making him feel his obligations to God and his Saviour, the value of his immortal soul and the hatefulness of sin, with emotions of a deeper and intenser cast; and looking to God for assistance, he tries to bring to the search the best use of his faculties.

We cannot but hope that they who are startled at the

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thought of bringing their reason to the investigation of the scriptures, are in reality afraid only of its being applied in a bold, reckless, and self-dependent spirit, and not of its being used in the way, which, we have endeavored to show, is strictly right and conscientious. We cannot but hope that the candid and modest, though not distrustful use of our understandings, in the search after a right faith, will find something in every one's conscience and sober judgment to recommend it; and, what is more, to urge it home upon him, as one of the first great duties which belong to him as a rational and accountable being, and which cannot be neglected without fearful consequences to his peace and happiness in his future life.

We have seen that the right use of our thinking faculties in religious inquiries consists in exercising them with fairness and ingenuousness of mind;—with a sincere love for the truth, and an entire openness to conviction;—with the caution and modesty which belong to an habitual just sense of the weakness of our faculties and of our liability to error;—and with a resolution perseveringly to follow the guide God has given us, heedfully and prayerfully indeed, but still to follow it, as the Giver of it meant we should. We would now remark that this guarded and conscientious employment of our reason will always lead us into a right faith;—in other words, that a right faith, one that is acceptable to God, is that, whether absolutely true or not, unto which this application of our powers may lead us. God requires of us the best and most perfect exercise we can make of the faculties he has given us. But as these are always imperfect, he will never demand of his creatures that which, in their very constitution, he has put it out of their power to attain to,—a faith absolutely

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and abstractly true. The morality of having a right faith consists therefore not in the positive correctness and truth of its articles, but in the qualities of the mind and heart with which we arrive at it. We may hold to a faith which the future enlargement of our faculties will discover to us to be full of errors, and yet be accepted of God; and we may hold to one absolutely free from error, without being accepted of him. Let this doctrine bring comfort and courage to every humble and inquiring soul; —that with a fair and honest mind, a modest and circumspect, though persevering use of their faculties, they can never go wrong; without them, they can never go right.

Again, we have observed that God will assist the natural feebleness of our reasoning powers, in those who ask it in sincerity and humility, by the imperceptible aids of his good spirit. It is as reasonable as it is scriptural to suppose that we may receive additional strength and light to our minds from the same source whence comes originally the mind itself and all its native endowments. We have reason moreover to believe that we are made with our faculties so limited and imperfect, in order to teach us our continual dependence on God, and our constant need of support and succor from him;—in order to prevent our hearts becoming swoln with pride and self-conceit, and to keep our carriage towards others from becoming haughty and overbearing. Wherefore, with a sincere mind and an humble heart, let us constantly approach the throne of the heavenly grace, and seek the light which we need in searching after truth, and in conducting the investigation with right dispositions and qualities of mind and heart. Let us implore the strength which we need

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to conduct ourselves towards others with the same bearing of candor and charity which we desire from them, and which is meant to be the great bond of union and love among Christians. Then, though, as imperfect beings, we still may not be free from error, yet as the humble followers and disciples of Christ, we shall be accepted of God, and admitted to the happiness of his kingdom.

FRAGMENT.

[From the Christian Observer]

THAT after-world! which, who that thinks
Can doubt; which, preach'd by heaven's authentic voice,
Yea, by its own light manifest, makes plain,
And wise, and comfortable, aught that else
Were misery, were vanity, were grief:
That after-world is all. There let me send
My heart, my treasure; deeply there forecast
My cares, my hopes, my happiness, my all.
I should have more and earlier look'd to this,—
Reckless too long of being's awful end;
Too much enamor'd of each way-side charm;
Studious with man's vain lore to load a mind,
Dead in its guilt—unvivified by grace,
And godliness; to trick as 'twere with flowers
A corse, meet only for the worm or fire.
Yet what had I to do, in this brief state,
But work out my salvation for the next,
(That world interminable of weal or woe!)
With fear and trembling; not by vexing cares
Cumber'd, or by dissatisfying joys,
But single-sighted,—on my one great task
Fix'd;—and athwart the obtrusive gaudes of sense
Stretching my gaze to faith's eternities.

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Years have been lost;—*up—stir* thee to redeem
All that of life may yet be thine; who knows
How little? life is but a scanty ledge
Where the poor traveller walks suspended o'er
A fathomless abyss!
Oh let him heed his footing—heed his side!
Chances play round him momently—and each
May sweep him to destruction.

IS THE CONDUCT OF MEN ESSENTIALLY AFFECTED BY THEIR OPINIONS ON THE THEORY OF MORALS?

We are so constituted that we cannot, if we would, entirely divest ourselves of the feeling, which leads us to inquire respecting our conduct, whether it be right or whether it be wrong. We cannot, if we would, go carelessly forward, quite regardless of the consequences of our actions. There will be times, when it will be peculiarly interesting to indulge in reflections on the nature and tendency of our conduct. And this desire to learn what actions are right and what are wrong, very naturally leads on to another inquiry; it prompts us to seek the *reason why* certain actions are approved and considered right, while certain other actions are disapproved and considered wrong. But this inquiry is of a speculative nature, and, though highly interesting to *all*, presents peculiar attractions to speculative minds. Accordingly, men of this turn of mind have delighted to employ themselves, in investigating the reason why one course of conduct is esteemed virtuous, and another vicious; and this inquiry into the reason why certain actions are approved and certain others disapproved, has given rise to various *theories of morals*. These theories have had, each its followers.

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The question then arises, can the opinions, which men entertain on these theories; or to take the subject more generally, can their opinions on any mere theory of morals essentially influence their conduct?

In order to come at an answer to this question, I would point out what appears to me a plain and important distinction between a *system* and a *theory* of morals. By a *system* of morals, I understand an enumeration of moral duties, a classification of actions into virtuous and vicious, a body of moral precepts, intended as a guide to the conduct. By a *theory* of morals, I understand a speculation concerning the reason why some actions and not others are enumerated as moral duties,—why, in the classification of actions, some are ranked among the virtuous and others among the vicious,—why a body of moral precepts inculcate the actions, which are inculcated by them, rather than others; and, still further, a theory of morals would embrace any inquiry into the nature and reasons of duty and obligation in general. A *system* of morals determines my doubts as to what actions are virtuous and what vicious. A *theory* of morals determines my doubts as to the *reason why* certain supposed actions are virtuous and not vicious. The one answers the question *what?*—the other, answers the question *why?* This may be still further illustrated. Our Saviour, while in the world, classified human actions into two kinds,—he gave an enumeration of moral duties, delivered a body of moral precepts; and from his life and preaching, as recorded by the evangelists, may be gathered a system of morals. But he advanced no speculations, no reasons to show *why* the course of conduct he inculcated was proper, consistent with our own natures, and with the will of God. Since the days of our Saviour, men

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have arisen, who, taking for granted that the actions enjoined by him were right, have endeavored to explain the reason why they are so. In advancing their speculations on this subject, they bring forward what I understand by a theory of morals.

Now I contend, that our conduct will vary, according to the greater or less degree of purity there may be in the system of morals we adopt, and not according to the theory we may embrace. For wherein do these theories differ? Is it respecting duty itself, respecting what course of conduct ought, and what ought not to be pursued? Certainly not; on this point, all are agreed. They all suppose a certain course of conduct to be correct,—and only differ, in assigning the reasons, why some actions are deemed virtuous and others vicious. The question then resolves itself into this.—"Will those, who perhaps agree respecting what is duty and what is opposed to duty, and the particular obligations they themselves are under to perform the one and to shun the other, conduct themselves essentially different, because they have embraced different theories?"

But this is a question not to be decided by abstract argument,—it admits of such evidence only, as may be drawn from the nature of man, from observation and experience. And I refer the question to my readers for a decision. If you sincerely believe it to be your duty, to reverence and obey your parents, to protect and nourish your children, will it make an essential difference in your conduct, whether you believe this to be your duty because it is agreeable to the fitness of things, or because it is consistent with the sympathies of our nature? If you sincerely believe it to be your duty, to do unto others as

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you would have them do unto you, will it make an essential difference in your conduct, whether you believe this to be the case because it is agreeable to the rules of political enactment or because it is expedient? If I, by reasoning on the utility of actions, am led to believe a certain course of conduct to be virtuous and to be my duty, and you, by inquiring what would most promote your own interest and happiness, are led to believe the same course of conduct to be your duty, will our conduct differ essentially, because we have embraced different theories,—because we have been led by different speculations to the same results? No, responds every reasonable mind. But still our actions are under the influence,—the entire control of our opinions. But are they not the opinions we form respecting what is our duty and the particular obligations we are under to perform it, and not the opinions we may form, or speculations we may entertain concerning the reason why such a course of conduct is our duty and why we are under obligations to perform it? But our opinions on the theory of morals fall under the latter class, and therefore cannot essentially influence our conduct.

Again, are we not so constituted, that it is inconsistent with our very natures, that our conduct should be governed by mere speculations? Could we, in our closets, reason ourselves into the belief, that it would be better, more agreeable to the fitness of things, to spend the day in sleep, and the night in labor, should we not, upon attempting to reduce this theory to practice, feel that it was inconsistent with our very natures? Could we, in our closets, reason ourselves into a belief, that all our actions are foreordained, in such a sense, that we could incur no guilt by any crime we might commit, should we not, upon

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going forth to practise upon this theory, feel that it was inconsistent with the very constitution of our souls? The sceptical philosophers could, in their closets, reason themselves into the belief, that there was no reality in the existence of the material world, but in going forth among their fellow men, they could not act out their theories, but conducted much like others. And so it is; we all feel, that our conduct is in all cases influenced by those opinions, which operate, not upon one particular faculty alone, but upon all the various springs of conduct, upon all the various qualities, of which conduct is the result. And what are those qualities? Is conduct the result of reason, and thought, and reflection alone, or is it influenced by all the various qualities of our conduct, by those of the heart, as well as those of the head? Look around upon your neighbors, and tell me, does not their conduct declare,—look in upon yourselves, and say, do not the feelings of your own hearts confirm the declaration, that man is under the influence of passions, and emotions, and feelings, and habits, as well as reason and reflection? Passions are often loud and turbulent in their demands, emotions are strong and overpowering, feelings easily excited, and habits soon become inveterate. In the moments of retirement, and cool reflection, reason may, and undoubtedly does see clearly, point out distinctly, and approve highly, the course of conduct, that ought to be pursued. But before these conclusions of reason can be embodied in action, there arises a conflict with the law of our members, with our passions, emotions, feelings and habits, so that conduct is finally influenced and modified by all these various qualities, is the result of them all united. Indeed, so completely is conduct under their in-

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fluence, that reason itself can operate upon it only through their means, only by governing the passions, checking and controlling the emotions and feelings, and modifying the habits.

If then our conduct be under the influence of reason itself, only so far as reason operates upon the passions, emotions, feelings and habits, shall I not be justified, in asserting, that every circumstance around us, and every opinion we form, to influence conduct essentially, must operate in the same way? But our opinions on the theory of morals do not operate thus. They address reason, and not passion;—they are matters of thought and reflection, not of feeling;—they exercise their power upon our speculations in retirement, and not upon our habits in active life; and consequently they cannot essentially influence our conduct.

My conclusion is this, that the opinions of men on the theory of morals, as they do not relate to duty itself, and do not operate directly upon the passions, emotions, feeling, and habits, which are the immediate springs of conduct, do not, and cannot materially affect their conduct.

O. E. F.

HINTS ON SELF-CORRECTION.

WHATEVER may be our faults, if we desire to be Christians, we shall use all proper means and exertions for their discovery and correction. By attending to the voice of public opinion, friendship, religion, and conscience, we may be assisted perhaps in our undertaking.

We must listen to the voice of *public opinion*. More or less remarks are made concerning us all. Some of

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them may be wholly true; some partly true; and some absolutely false. We must listen to these so far as to ascertain, by a strict self-examination and a rigid comparison with the only rule of duty, whether they are true, or founded, in any degree, on truth. If upon proper inspection, we detect in ourselves aught in itself wrong, or which has even the appearance of evil, we must immediately rebuke it. We must not reject such information because it may chance to come from the gossiping, the unfriendly, or the malicious. It is the part of wisdom and duty, to give proper heed to all just remarks concerning one's character; and when made acquainted with our faults, from whatever source the knowledge has been derived, faithfully to confess them, and carefully to apply the wholesome remedies which reason and religion alike prescribe.

We must listen also to the voice of *friendship*. To give us information of our faults, is the kindest act of friendship. He who does not faithfully perform this duty is not a true friend; and he who does not gratefully receive any such intimations, is unworthy the blessing he possesses. Friendship naturally implies an almost unreserved interchange of thought, and the deepest interest in each other's welfare. And shall my intimate pretend that he opens to me his whole heart, and that he is deeply interested in my welfare, while he withholds from me his knowledge of my faults, the only information that can essentially benefit me; and if he faithfully performs this primary duty, shall I be angry, and cast him off? Let those who thus act, denominate their alliance by some other name than friendship.

If then we are blessed with friends, we must request

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them, as they regard our mutual welfare, to have an eye on our conduct, and to be prompt in acquainting us with our faults; and with sincerity and earnestness should we avail ourselves of the least hint from them to amend our characters.

We must listen likewise to the voice from the *pulpit*. It is the preacher's duty to adapt his instructions to the circumstances and wants of every hearer. If he draws them from his own experience, from his observations on society, and from the volume of inspiration, they will apply in a greater or less degree to every individual. We should therefore listen for our own direct improvement. We should listen as those who expect to give an account for the use made of all the means of virtue. We ought to listen as those who are deeply solicitous to be made wiser, better, and happier. And when we examine the scriptures to ascertain the correctness of the preacher's statements, we must never omit to prove our own hearts and lives by the same holy standard. Let us beware of that misplaced criticism, which wastes the precious moments when our recollections of what we have heard are the freshest, in idle comments on the preacher's talents. The first use we make of a sermon should be the application of it to our own hearts. He who neglects this, let him go to conventicle or to church, and hear the most gifted or the most indifferent preacher, is alike unprofited, and might as well not have gone to the house of worship at all.

Finally, we must hear to the voice of *conscience*. This inward monitor, we must daily seek to enlighten by the devout study of christian principles. We must let her admonitions guide us as implicitly as a man follows a

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conductor whom he believes to be trust-worthy, through paths to himself all unknown. But we must never mistake the wicked suggestions of passion, or interest, or obstinacy for her instructions. We must not plead conscience as an excuse for any action, or any course of conduct, unless it is in strict accordance with the precepts and example of Jesus. Any feelings, or any actions which are not sanctioned by the plain rules and acknowledged spirit of his religion, are not the fruits of a healthy conscience. We must therefore, scrutinize every motive and principle of action, and bring them into subjection to the divine standard. And in order to succeed in our endeavors, we must ever accompany our hearing, our reading, our self-examination, and our self-cultivation with this humble ejaculation—Lord, cleanse thou me from secret faults, keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins! B. W.

EXPLANATION OF TEXTS.

Romans ix. 5.

St. Paul begins this chapter by declaring in very strong terms his grief for the condition to which his own nation were to be reduced. This grief is enhanced by the consideration of those remarkable circumstances by which God had distinguished them from all other people, for so many ages. The most striking of these, he enumerates thus, "who are Israelites, whose was the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the law, and the ritual service, and the promises; whose were the fathers, and of whom, according to the flesh, was the Christ; he who

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was over all, being God blessed forever." This rendering is a little varied from the common English version, but not from the Greek construction. The phrase "to whom *pertaineth*" in our version does not answer to the original, but the translation we give does precisely correspond. The phrase "*as concerning the flesh*" is different from what our translators themselves give for the *same* Greek terms in the preceding verse, "kinsmen according to the flesh." The Jews were Paul's kinsmen, inasmuch as he was descended from a Jewish parentage. It was the pride of that people that the Messiah was to be of their own lineage. The only other change in the version we give, is a slight alteration in the punctuation, which we are warranted in making by the well known fact that the points as we now have them are of no authority whatever. The Apostle's design in the whole passage would lead him to crown his enumeration of Jewish privileges with that which was the most striking of all, that God was their king,—sustaining the place of a political head over them. Their government was a Theocracy, and this above every thing else, made them a peculiar people. It was their national prerogative. The Apostle could not more naturally close an enumeration of Jewish privileges, than with this.

The writer from whom we have borrowed the substance of this explanation, *(see Christian Disciple for Sept. and Oct.* 1819, *Review of Stuart's Letters,)* has also stated a fact which confirms this understanding of the passage in the most satisfactory manner. In the controversies about the nature of Christ, which existed among the early fathers, the most Orthodox *never* applied to our Lord the title of "God over all." "On the contrary,

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some of their number have expressly *denied* that this title belongs to him. It was applied to him by the Sabellians, and was considered as a distinguishing mark of their heresy." Would this text have been overlooked, if it was rendered by the Greek fathers themselves as it is now by Trinitarians?

LETTER OF A BOSTON GENTLEMAN TO A UNITARIAN CLERGYMAN OF THAT CITY.

It is an old way of excusing a defection from a cause we have long supported, that of disparaging our associates in it, as no longer worthy our confidence and aid. But we believe this is not the real character of the pamphlet before us, however much appearances are against it. We think this gentleman has been led away by some strong and sudden impulses, or perhaps by some secret sympathies hitherto repressed by his better judgment, but now overpowering his reason, and producing a recoiling in the mind from its soundest conclusions in times past, as if they were treacherous.

As to the charges against Unitarians, if they are true, God grant we may profit by them to our amendment! But it is natural to ask our accuser, if while he was of our number, he did not pray, give liberally, aid in all religious charities, such as Sunday schools, missions, and the like? We have reason to say that he did, that he was exemplary in these matters, unless we attribute this book to a wrong pen. If we are right, then he is a living testimony that one need not quit the Unitarian denomination in order to keep clear of all the faults he ascribes to us. He has certainly not laid to his own charge any

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such sins as would argue that his principles were ruining his soul. We wish he had confined himself to that topic, of the effects of Unitarianism on *his own* heart and life. It is invidious to draw comparisons between large bodies of men. We could easily make out a picture of Orthodoxy more shocking than his picture of his ancient friends. But we will not. We only say, that man must know a great deal, who is *qualified* to testify against some thousands of his fellow creatures, most of whom he never saw or heard of, that they do not pray *in secret*, are not spiritual in their *thoughts*, but are Sabbath-breakers and without benevolent affections, and profanely negligent of God and duty.

Upon the principle advanced in this pamphlet, no christian sect could stand its ground. What ought an unconverted Corinthian to have inferred from the drunkenness of the church in Corinth, during the celebration of the supper? What ought to have been said of Christianity when all Christians were Roman Catholics, and all Roman Catholics bought indulgences to sin? What was the religion of those worth, who having fled from home and country, to escape persecution, had no sooner become settled in a new dwelling-place, than they would fain hang Quakers, and burn old women for witches?

The whole principle is unsound. The gospel must be judged by its own truths, and not by the conduct of those who embrace those truths. Unitarianism must be tried by the word of God, and *that alone*. What Jesus *teaches* and not what Christians do, is Christianity. To the word and to the testimony!

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JUDGE HOWE.

Obituary. Died in Boston, January 20th, the Hon. Samuel Howe, of Northampton, one of the Judges of the Court of Common Pleas.

The highest testimony has set its seal to Judge Howe's professional talents and acquisitions, while the community, as with one voice, has expressed its sense of his eminent usefulness and pure integrity in his official station. His virtues as a man, and a friend, have received a tribute the most tender and fervent, from all who knew him. We record his name here, as a noble witness to our holy religion, which he exemplified in some of its most exalted traits, during a life marked by much personal suffering, but devoted unweariedly to the best ends; and to whose truth and efficacy he attested in the most affecting manner, at the hour of death.

It is believed that Judge Howe was a Unitarian, and that he held his principles as the fruit of thorough and serious inquiry, and not of education. But we wish rather to dwell upon his religious character as it stands apart from all sectarian alliances. He was no partizan. His attachment was to the gospel, to Christ, and to all good men. To the study of the Bible he brought a mind singularly clear from all prejudice, cool, deliberate and powerful. He rose from that study with the deepest conviction of the divine origin and authority of our religion. He gave his testimony to it as a lawyer and judge, versed in human nature, and skilled in analyzing human evidence, never wedded by a blind partiality to ancient opinions, and open to the light of truth, from whatever quarter it

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might come. In perfect consistency with this testimony, he modelled his whole character and plan of life, all his pursuits and engagements, with a single eye to religious responsibility. He was a pious and benevolent man in every relation he sustained. Most esteemed and even revered, where he was most intimately known, he has left his example as a precious legacy to all who "would live godly in Christ Jesus."

At all times it becomes us to speak with humility and awe of the death-scene of a holy man. We dread boasting on such a subject. But it has pleased God to give us in the death of Judge Howe, a theme for the most consoling and instructive meditations. Exhausted by a sudden and severe disease, he lay for some days in almost complete unconsciousness apparently. But about an hour before his departure, his mental and bodily powers were awakened to such a degree that he was able to converse in his usual firm and clear manner, for a length of time, to his surrounding friends. Having fervently implored of God a continuance of strength and reason, he spoke on all the subjects then most interesting, with an eloquent solemnity, but with entire composure. His dying testimony was given to the efficacy of religion, the comfort of a christian hope, and the importance of a christian life. He gratefully acknowledged the great goodness of God to him in the past period of his existence, and tranquilly commended himself to that mercy which is promised through Jesus Christ, for that eternity which was opening upon him.

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[For the Unitarian Advocate.]

EVENING HYMN.

Father, thy mercies never fail;
Again the evening shades prevail,
And soothed I hear the still small voice,
That bids me in thy care rejoice.

Beneath thy sun's all-cheering ray
I 've plied my task another day,
And thrice my strength refresh'd has been
With food and converse sweet between.

Thy works, all-beautiful and good,
I 've scann'd and partly understood;
Clothed in their livery of light
All speak thy wisdom, love and might.

When darkness veils the earth and skies,
New worlds and wonders o'er me rise,
That tell in words of flame from far
How vast, how bright thy glories are.

Kept by thy all-sustaining power,
I welcome now the solemn hour,
That comes my weary lids to close,
And lay me down to sweet repose.

Wrapt in the soft embrace of sleep,
Let angel guards their vigils keep
About my bed, and be my rest
With holy dreams and visions blest.

While my tired frame in mimic death
Lies motionless, save pulse and breath,
Let my free spirit heavenward fly,
And without dying learn to die. J. F. S.

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SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

SUNDAY SCHOOL INSTRUCTION.

In the instruction given in Sunday schools great care should be taken to avoid a narrow and mechanical routine of exercises, as injurious to the mind. Lessons should be drawn from as wide a range of subjects as the teacher finds conducive to mental activity and earnest attention, on the part of the scholars, as well as to the natural freedom and strength of their thoughts. Too great a variety of objects is, no doubt, unfavorable to steadiness of attention and closeness of thinking, and therefore to vigor of character; and this is a point which ought never to be forgotten in teaching. There is a salutary medium here as in other things. The common error, however, is evidently that of confining children's minds to a very limited number of subjects.

To restrict the understanding in this way, not only enfeebles it, but interferes with its ability to derive religious light and happiness from a free and natural intercourse with the objects of daily observation or experience. The evil complained of is, that children are too commonly taught to look for religious instruction and improvement as proceeding solely and directly from the services of the sanctuary, or the exercises of the Sunday school—from thoughts of an invisible Being, the constant and perhaps jealous witness of our actions—from imaginations of heavenly happiness and glory—from reading or reciting texts of scripture or pieces of devotional poetry.

In this way the practical and useful part of religion is

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too much neglected, while the speculative, and contemplative, and the ceremonial are made to absorb the attention. Religion should be presented to the young, especially, as a living and active principle, which they have or have not, just as they respect and practise all their duties. That child is truly religious who thinks and acts rightly towards his parents, and brothers, and sisters—his teachers and his companions. Children cannot be too often reminded that religion does not consist in going regularly to church and to Sunday school, or even in being attentive when there—that it does not consist in getting or saying lessons well, or in possessing deep thoughts and intense feelings about God and heaven, or about death and eternity—but in observing truth, in being kind, patient, gentle, and forgiving; in being disinterested, and in being diligent and constant in duty of every kind.

Happiness should not be held up as a prize for great efforts, or for a future state, so much as the natural consequence of doing right, of keeping the mind free from conscious blame—as a regular part of the arrangements of our Creator, if we do not deprive ourselves of it by neglect or by wilfulness. Religious improvement, in a word, should be spoken of as a thing natural to a thinking and reflecting mind, and should in this way become a part of the history of individual life.

It is difficult to produce religious impressions, chiefly because we think it is so, and above all that we make it so by telling children that it is so, or by taking formal and unnatural measures to effect our object. Religious instruction has usually too much of mere arbitrary inculcation in it. Children are commanded to be good, obe-

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dient, &c., and are catechised about articles of religious belief, till they are, as it were, drilled into religious character.

"The wisdom which cometh from above," is, like all other wisdom, founded on *knowledge*. Habits of attention and reflection are essential to it. It is to be imparted through sound, enlightened, and liberal instruction in all things which are interesting and useful to human beings. It is acquired by looking with an intelligent mind on all the works of the Creator, as the appointed means of rising to higher and better thoughts of him—by regarding all human beings with a sacred affection as his children, and by acting on the feelings which these thoughts inspire—by being so alert in all duty that we avoid falling into sloth and sin—and by keeping our minds serene and cheerful from a sense of progress. Religious instruction, in short, is valuable, not in proportion as it developes feeling and imagination, but as it subjects these to the understanding, and incorporates them with it. In this era of excitement, the religious character, among the young, especially, seems to need *intelligence*, much more than ardor or spirituality.

In stating these views, nothing new, probably, has been communicated. Yet we may safely appeal to observation, and inquire of those who visit Sunday schools, whether these things are not frequently forgotten; and whether the characteristics of instruction are not much more generally zeal and feeling, than judgment and skilful adaptation—whether teachers do not usually seem bent on making an *impression at the time*, rather than on aiding the natural rise of thought which shall influence *the habits of the mind*.

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Under this conviction, we have ventured on the preceding ideas, as introductory to the mention of several subjects which, among others, ought to be introduced in instruction given at Sunday schools; and the first of these which we would mention, is an attentive study of *nature* in its principal departments. To connect such subjects with religious references, is peculiarly the duty of the Sunday school teacher; as in most books on such topics the aim is rather to render the whole entertaining than useful, or to treat these things strictly as branches of science. A free use of the best illustrations, such as models and engravings, if not the objects themselves, should never be regarded as an employment unfit for that day when it is the common privilege of young and old to disengage themselves from ordinary pursuits, and give up the mind to thoughts of its great Author, and the things which he has made.

As a branch of the works of Divine power and wisdom, the *mind* itself in its more obvious operations may very advantageously be made a part of religious instruction, as preparing the way for an intelligent and voluntary co-operation with conscience,the great power of the soul, and its best guide. Rational and spiritual conceptions of the Deity, will in this way be very naturally and powerfully assisted.

A system of intellectual philosophy is a thing of course inapplicable to the minds of children, and would only bewilder and perplex them. But a simple observation of their own thoughts and feelings, as developed in their daily employments and in ordinary occurrences —all communicated in enlivening but plain conversation, children do enter into with understanding and

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with pleasure. It is such instruction only that we should wish for.

Another source whence religious instruction might be more freely drawn than is now customary, is *sacred history*. A judicious selection from the old and new Testaments, of the events necessary to a clear understanding of the christian revelation, would be a great aid to the minds of children. In this department of instruction should be included every thing in geography and history, with the requisite information regarding manners and customs, which tends to throw light on the language of the scriptures.

Free conversation about daily duties, connecting these with the improvement of the mind, and hallowing them with religious sentiment, is a branch of instruction still more essential to the character and the happiness of the young. Narratives from true, and even from fictitious history, may be of assistance here; though the latter require much judicious care, both in the selection and the use of them. *Sacred poetry*, too, may be of great service in this, as in all other departments of Sunday school instruction, as an avenue to the noblest and finest feelings of the youthful mind, and a channel for the expression of its vivid and elevated emotions. The addition of *sacred music* is only that of another influence of the same class, but still more powerful, whether applied to the sublime or the tender expressions of thought and feeling.

The most difficult subject, perhaps, to manage rightly with children, is that of instruction regarding the *Deity*. The incomprehensible nature of the Being of whom we speak, our own inability to form conceptions purely

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spiritual, our inaptitude in finding access to the minds of children, the danger of fatal mistakes; all render this subject a difficult one. It is not perhaps advisable to attempt any thing here, in the way of direct and distinct instruction, but rather to connect it naturally with other topics—to let it rise, as it were, spontaneously in the minds of children, by placing all objects, as much as possible, in such lights as shall communicate simple, and rational, and affectionate views of the great Parent; leaving a more definite knowledge to be the result of a more enlarged and intelligent mind.

It is too often the case that attempts to think directly of the Deity, degenerate, in the minds of children, into mere vague wonder and mystery, or become connected with fear, or degenerate into childish and grotesque errors of the imagination. This subject we ought not to neglect because it is difficult; but it needs much caution, and much light, and, (let it be freely spoken,) is less essential to children than a happy observation of nature, and a cheerful conformity to duty. A TEACHER.

[From the Rev. Dr Parker's Address.]

HINTS TO TEACHERS.

WE state this important principle; if you would guide others with the best prospect of success, you yourselves must cultivate an intimate acquaintance with the religion, which it is your purpose to teach, and gain, in some degree at least, possession of the spirit, which animated the great Teacher from heaven; that is, you must be personally religious. By this remark we do not mean to

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be understood, as asserting, that God may not bless the truths, taught by persons, who have no very deep practical conviction of the value of the gospel, or that none should enter upon the duties of a teacher, who feel not an entire confidence in their own religious characters. God may give effect to his truth, with whatever motives it is dispensed; and Sabbath schools acquire increased interest, when considered as admirably calculated to bless those who give, as well as those who receive instruction. But it cannot be doubted, that the more thoroughly you are acquainted with the truth as it is in Jesus, and the more deeply you feel personally its influence, the brighter is your prospect of being made blessings to the children under your instruction. Then you cannot fail to teach intelligibly, seriously, affectionately, and with perseverance. No selfish purposes will pollute your exertions. The generous spirit of a purifying faith will animate all your efforts. You will go to the examination of the lessons, which you are to inculcate, with minds and hearts elevated, and purified by the influence of prayer. And will you not be better qualified to urge the duty of prayer, and to engage the affections of your pupils in this heavenly employment, if you personally know the value of the privilege; if you come to them with hearts warm with pious affections, and deeply feeling the animating spirit of devotion? If you never pray yourselves, your lessons upon this subject will be destitute of that, which would give them their highest power in awakening devout feelings, and in establishing habits of piety in others. Remarks of the same character apply to every part of religious instruction. If you know not God as your father, how can you teach children to know him as their

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father? If Christ has never benefited you personally, how can you describe in a feeling manner his unspeakable kindness? You may, indeed, give very important instructions without feeling a personal interest in religion, and God may bless them. But how different are our descriptions of the character of a friend, who is constantly making us feel his worth; whose wisdom and love are intimately connected with our personal enjoyments and hopes, from those, which we give of a man, of equal, perhaps of superior worth, but with whose excellences we have been made acquainted by the representations of others only. In exerting a moral and religious influence, much is effected by the power of sympathy. This power we cannot employ in the cause of Christ, unless we are personally Christians.

* * * * * *

It deserves consideration, whether the teachers may not exert a salutary influence over the children, by employing some care to procure for them good situations, after they shall have left the school. Many, who come to you for instruction, will be obliged to provide entirely for the supply of their own wants, and at a very early age to seek employment, by which they can procure a maintenance. Would it not be very useful, if the teachers should give this subject some attention? If children are suffered to loiter about the streets in idleness, after they have ceased to attend the exercises of our public schools; or if they are thrown into the society of the irreligious, when they are placed out to labor; whatever may have been their attainments and promise, while under your care, the danger is imminent, that they will soon become vicious members of the community. Let

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the teachers pay particular regard to those, who appear to be disposed to improve instruction. By a very little attention, they may generally be placed in situations, in which their good habits and principles will be strengthened. This will be a very suitable reward for exemplary conduct in school, and the means of continuing the blessing of christian instruction, and of forming virtuous members of society.

EFFECT OF A SUNDAY SCHOOL.

It was near the close of a Sabbath which I was spending during the last summer in a retired village in a neighboring state, that I accepted the invitation of my friend to accompany him to a Sunday school, which had been recently established, and in which he was much interested. After walking a short distance, we came in sight of the school house, a neat and commodious building, situated at the bottom of a hill. It was a pleasing sight to see some of the children on each side of the road, neatly clad, going towards the school house, and others who had reached it, sitting on the door step, reading their hymns, and intently engaged in conversation, waiting for the door to be opened. Their cheerful countenances and modest address on our arrival, proclaimed to me, more audibly than words the pleasure they enjoyed on meeting their teacher.

Soon after we entered, many other teachers came in, and the exercises commenced. I was alike pleased with the remarks of the superintendant, and their adaptation to the minds of the children, and with the good order and

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attention that prevailed; as well as the faithful manner in which the few classes I was able to listen to were taught. The exercises occupied about an hour, when after singing a hymn, in which all united, the school was dismissed.

I was highly gratified with my visit, and could easily account for the interest taken in the school by the children, many of whom as my friend informed me, lived at the distance of one or two miles, but who nevertheless attended very regularly every Sunday.

It was near sunset when we left the school house, and on our way home we stopped at the house of the clergyman in the village. Among other things in the course of the evening, the conversation turned upon the Sunday school; when a lady present, who was a teacher in the one we had visited, remarked, that she was almost discouraged at times, by the dulness and inattention of her scholars, and for her part, she could see but little as yet effected by the establishment of the school, that was encouraging. "It is true, my young friend," said the good pastor, "you may at times be discouraged by the indifferent progress your pupils make, and the apparently slow advancement you may witness in them, but are we not wrong to require sudden and visible improvement? Good habits are slowly and almost imperceptibly formed, and often we do not produce the reformation we looked for, until the child approaches manhood. It is gratifying however to know that by assembling them together, you cause the Sabbath to be improved and honored by them, that day which would be far otherwise employed; and to know that idleness and indifference to religious duty is overcome, which is accomplishing a great deal towards forming sound moral and religious habits and

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principles. But you may rejoice that you are permitted sometimes to witness results from your labors which are not only encouraging, and which stimulate you to persevere, but which render the labor and exertion spent, as nothing in comparison with the good effected. Have you forgotten the circumstance of Mr W——? " said he.—Oh no, was quickly answered, that to be sure was enough to pay for establishing the school, if nothing else. I was struck with the answer, and could not refrain from inquiring what the circumstance was, when the good pastor related to me the following.

On commencing the school, the families who lived in the neighborhood were invited to come in, and visit it, and among them was Mr W——. Some remarks were made at the time on the importance of instructing the young, and the duty incumbent on those who were able to assist in this good cause. He was much affected by them, and was led to inquire more particularly about the school; and after some considerable conversation upon the subject, by solicitation he was induced to take a class, and happy I am to say, that, though he was previous to this, indifferent to religious subjects, *and had not attended public worship for many years*, yet he soon became interested, *and has now the principal charge of the school*, and remarked not long since, "that he looks forward to Sunday, and the hour spent by him in the Sunday school, with the greatest pleasure."

A pause ensued when the good man finished, and I could not but consider on hearing this fact, which forcibly impressed my mind, how much these institutions are effecting. Soon, thought I, the ignorance which we now regret to see, will pass away, and a more perfect know-

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ledge of the word of life be diffused even in our remotest villages, through their instrumentality; and circumstances like this, will frequently occur in them, which will serve as encouragement, and show the good effected by a Sunday school. R.

INTELLIGENCE.

Unitarianism in Connecticut.—Extract from a letter to the publishers of the Advocate, dated Brooklyn, Con. Feb. 14, 1828—" A few days since I received the pleasing intelligence, that a Unitarian Tract Society or Association is to be formed in Preston, a town about twenty miles from this.—I hope soon to send you an order from them." " It is my intention to go to Preston to assist in forming their proposed Association—and I think I shall take the hint and attempt the formation of similar Associations in various other places."

Gibbs's Gesenius. The highly valuable translation of Gesenius' Hebrew Lexicon, by Professor Gibbs of Yale College, is republished in London. We notice also an advertisement of " Hope Leslie," as in press.

Balance of Crime. Rev. Isaac Taylor of Ongar, has issued a work entitled " Balance of Crime, or *Socinianism* compared with the guiltiness of *profligacy*, addressed to young doubters."

German Theology. The Christian Observer states that the representations which have been made to the discredit of the German Universities and ministry, apply rather to a period past by, than to the present time.

Bibles imprisoned. At a meeting of a Bible society in Glasgow, last fall, the Rev. Dr Paterson remarked that when he was on the Continent, " he found six thousand copies of the New Testament, filled with Socinianism, which being put into his hands to be destroyed, *he consigned to a fortress*, where they remained in good custody."

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Religious Denominations in Europe.—From an estimate recently published it appears that there are in Europe,

Roman Catholics,	112,378,428.
Greek Church, more than	40,000,000
English Church,	6,500,000
Presbyterians,	2,300,000
English Dissenters.	3,000,000

Old South Church in Portsmouth, N. H.—The Old South Church in Portsmouth, N. H. formerly occupied by Rev. Dr Parker's society, has been opened, and provision made for the support of regular worship, with every prospect of the establishment of another Unitarian Society in that place—The pulpit will be supplied at present by a gentleman from the school at Cambridge.

New Meeting House in Walpole, N. H.—The new meeting house lately erected in Walpole, N. H. was dedicated to the service of Almighty God on Wednesday, Feb. 20th—Sermon by Rev. Mr Sullivan of Keene, N. H.

Christian Neighbor.—Proposals are issued by Mr William E. P. Rogers, for publishing at Gloucester, Ms., a weekly Newspaper, to be entitled the *Christian Neighbor*—to be edited by Samuel Worcester—

[In selecting this title, the editor has been guided by what he proposes for his motto,—THOU SHALT LOVE THY NEIGHBOR AS THYSELF. His design is, to publish a newspaper devoted to *practical religion.* The public are already supplied with those which teach whatever relates to the outworks of religion,—to forms and modes of faith and worship. Many think that there is a powerful and increasing disposition among the teachers and lovers of virtue in the present age, to inquire for the right way of living; and to estimate religious opinions by their practical tendency and results. While so many are deeply interested in maintaining the peculiar tenets of the several religious sects, it has been thought that at least one paper may be supported, which teaches merely the ART OF LIVING A CHRISTIAN LIFE.]

Number of Ministers in New England.—The Quarterly Journal of the American Education Society contains a tabular view of the number of ministers of all denominations in New England, as given in the Registers of the several states for 1827. The number, as in the Registers, is 1684. The actual number of *stated* ministers

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in New England, of all denominations, is supposed to be not far from 1800. The population of New England is probably 1,800,000. This would give one minister to every 1000 souls. In the year 1750, there was in New England, one *liberally educated* minister to every 628 souls.

American Bible Class Society.—About a year and a half since, overtures were made by the Pastoral Association of Evangelical Ministers in Massachusetts, to the American Sunday School Union, which led to the appointment of a Provisional Committee on Bible Classes, consisting of gentlemen from different denominations. This committee, after corresponding extensively with pastors of churches, and taking other measures to ascertain the public sentiment, unanimously resolved, that it was expedient to form a national institution for promoting Bible Classes.

Such an institution was accordingly organized on the 13th ult., in Philadelphia. The constitution contains ten articles, but it will be sufficient to quote the first—

Art. 1. This Society shall be called the "*American Bible Class Society.*" Its objects shall be to collect and disseminate knowledge concerning Bible Classes, where they exist, how they are conducted, and what advantages have resulted from them; to devise and execute measures, not interfering with the government and doctrine of the churches, or the appropriate province of their pastors, to promote the organization and prosperity of Bible Classes among all denominations throughout the land, and to correspond and cooperate with any kindred institution which may be formed in any other part of the world.

Religious Magazines in the United States.

Name of the work.	Where printed.
Episcopal Register,	Middlebury, Vt.
Quarterly Journal of the American Education Society.	Andover. Ms.
Missionary Herald,	Boston. Ms.
American Baptist Magazine,	do.
Christian Magazine,	do.
Christian Examiner,	do.
Hopkinsian Magazine,	Providence, R. I.
Christian Spectator,	New Haven, Con.
American Tract Magazine,	New York city.
Methodist Magazine,	do.
National Preacher,	do.

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Magazine of the Reformed Dutch Church,	N. Brunswick, N. J.
Christian Advocate, - - - - - -	Philadelphia, Pa.
American Sunday School Magazine, - -	do.
United Brethren's Missionary Intelligencer and Religious Miscellany, - - - - - -	do.
Religious Magazine, or Spirit of the Foreign Theol. Journals and Reviews, - - - -	do.
Magazine of the German Reformed Church,	Carlisle, Pa.
Evangelical Lutheran Intelligencer, - - -	Frederick, Md.
Theological Repertory and Churchman's guide,	Washington city.
African Repository and Colonial Journal, -	do.
Literary and Evangelical Magazine, - - -	Richmond, Va.
Religious Examiner, - - - - - - -	Cadiz, Ohio.
Liberal Preacher, - - - - - - - -	Keene, N. H.
Unitarian, - - - - - - - - -	New York.
American Evangelist, - - - - -	Boston, Ms.
Christian Visitant, - - - - - - -	do.
Unitarian Advocate, - - - - - - -	do.
New Jerusalem Magazine, - - - - -	do.

Religious Newspapers in the United States.—Their number is 37; and nearly 3,000,000 of printed sheets are supposed to be issued annually.

Church at Lechmere Point.—Mr Warren Burton, from the Theological School at Cambridge, having accepted the invitation to become pastor of the Third Congregational Society in Cambridge, situated at Lechmere Point, will be ordained on the 12th instant—Sermon by Rev. Mr Greenwood of this city—The pews on the floor of the new church just erected for this society were offered at auction, and the principal part of them met with a ready sale.—On those sold a premium of between five and six hundred dollars was obtained.

Ordination.—Rev. Samuel Presbury was ordained as Pastor of the Society in Northfield on Connecticut river, the 27th of February.

☞ The communications of A. and E. P. B. are received, and will be inserted in another number.

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THE

UNITARIAN ADVOCATE.

VOL. I. APRIL, 1828. No. IV.

ERROR IN EVERY SYSTEM IS TRUTH DISTORTED.

THEOLOGIANS have said much of the proportion or analogy of faith, *i. e.* as they mean, of a great and well proportioned system of truth, into an arrangement and harmony with which all doubtful speculation should be brought. For this good sort of theory, yet bad principle of investigation, they commonly adduce the text, "whether prophesying, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith."

I reject the explanation, indeed, but I wish to bring forward a similar sentiment, though not for a similar purpose. For although it would be a bad method of investigation, to take a creed or a system, and to resolve our doubts by it, yet it is undoubtedly correct to say, that there is a proportion or system in truth,—there is a congruity and harmony of its parts, there is a structure which will be unfolded to our eye, when we have dissipated the darkness of our ignorance—when the rubbish is removed, and the mists are scattered, to which doubt and prejudice may be too faithfully likened. Indeed, truth often consists not so much in the exact definition of one idea, as in the judicious balancing of several; and

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we shall attain to truth, not so well by gazing on the magnificent front of its edifice, not so well by marking one luminous spot or sightly aspect, as by taking into our view the whole structure.

Now, I think, that much of error arises from viewing too exclusively these luminous spots and sightly aspects, and majestic disclosures of certain parts—in other words, error arises from partial views of truth. It consists in departing from the proportion of truth, not in raising an entirely new fabric, on an entirely new foundation. And if we would seek for truth, therefore, we may expect to find it not in what is absolutely new and original—(this is apt to be the fault of an eager, speculative, and innovating age)—but we may expect to find truth mixed with error—to find it disfigured with human imaginations and overborne with human inventions—to find it in the ruins of systems that have passed away, or in the broken fragments of systems that are now sinking down to be dust and rubbish for other centuries. This method of pursuing truth, too, is recommended not only for being the true method, but because it cultivates habits both of discrimination and charity. I wish therefore to apply this method and the observations with which I have introduced it, to some consideration of christian sects—doctrines—and practical sentiments.

I. The sects into which christendom is divided, have, most of them, arisen out of this very failure of which I have been speaking, to keep the proportion of the faith. They have not only much important truth among them severally, but their peculiarities have generally resulted from regard to some one truth which they have pushed to excess and to error. There are those, I am aware, who

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tell us that the very existence of these sects, betrays the love of error—that all schism is a wilful departure from truth and light. But surely a more lenient judgment is to be formed, on this subject. No sect was ever based on the very presumption, or acknowledgment, or consciousness of error or sin. Some truth—some advantage, real or imaginary, is always proposed. And very often something is gained, though as we may think, at the expense of other things. Aversion to forms in religion characterises some sects, and a high estimation of them, others. To some, the expediency of an hierarchy is evident, and with others, the desire of independency is strong. Now forms, and the absence of forms, and power, and independence, are in their measure, good things; and after all, men of every sect, must and will have more or less of them. And yet the predominance not to say excess of one or other of these, makes Episcopalians, and Presbyterians, and Congregationalists, and Quakers. If there could be just enough form, and just enough simplicity, and just enough power, and just enough independence, so happy a combination might demand a new name, and justify a new sect. For I question whether any sect, however it may boast, has attained to this.

Again, as to the speculative differences that occasion different sects, there is always some good doctrine in view. A great, and as we may think, too exclusive sense of the mercy of God, makes honest Antinomians and Universalists. Deep and solemn impressions of human depravity and of God's justice, as they tell us, lead others to be Calvinists. Now, surely, to exalt the mercy of God is right, and to maintain his justice is equally so; and he

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surely is to be respected who is anxious lest he should think too lightly of human unworthiness. Look once more, at the means, which different sects advocate for promoting religion. Some lay the stress of their advice on our looking *within*. And most certainly, nothing can be more rational, wise, or important, than such a direction. Men's religion has been too much an outward thing, and they have too little respected the solemn intimations of God's will which are signified in their own hearts. I seriously believe that we have all thought too little of the momentous teachings of God in our own consciences. And it would not be strange surely, if the mind that had been fully arrested and turned to this inward voice, should undervalue outward oracles and means. But another class is constantly exclaiming—"to the law—to the law, and to the testimony." And, truly the law and the testimony are most excellent and important means of instruction. They give us the most momentous information. They are, it seems to me, to be unspeakably prized. But it is possible to carry our just reverence to an undue superstition, and to value too little the revelation of God in the soul.

With regard to the means of promoting religion in others, some prefer written discourses, others, extemporaneous, and others, impromptu addresses arising from the impulse of the moment. And doubtless they all have their advantages. I think, indeed, that the kind of instruction last mentioned, has done much to give the class of Christians in which it prevails their *practical* views of religion. For men speaking from the impulse of the moment, though on this account, they might less inform and strengthen the mind, would on this account, too, be less inclined or

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able to enter much into metaphysics, or polemics, or abstruse systems of theology. Extemporaneous and written discourses, moreover, have their obvious advantages. And itinerant preaching, too, which distinguishes one or two of the largest sects in this country, has its advantages. A succession of preachers awakens interest. Change relieves the preacher, also, and his brief stay or residence in a place enables him to give to the people the best efforts and choicest productions of his mind. An itinerant, or a travelling ministry, too, excellently meets the present exigency of the country. A stationary minister cannot with advantage address his people more than two or three times in a week. But a travelling minister can preach once or twice in a day, for he has every time, a new congregation. This practice, connected with the zeal, however uncultivated and unrefined, which attends it, is giving instruction to otherwise neglected multitudes in our western states. The Education Society tells us, I know, that fourfifths of the population of these states are destitute of competent instruction—that six thousand preachers are wanted in this country, &c. This, at least, is the last of their statements which I have read. But, making every allowance for good intentions, I cannot help thinking this statement both untrue and unjust. Providence has done better than this for our western brethren. Indeed, I look upon the habits and zeal of the western sects, as a wonderful provision of Providence for that country. I rejoice, that its instruction did not fall into the hands of a merely literary and decent ministry, of cold metaphysicians, or abstruse theologues. "The foolishness of God," says an apostle, "is wiser than men, and the weakness of

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God is stronger than men." On the other hand, the advantage of a learned and permanent ministry, in other circumstances, none of us will be disposed to question.

Thus we see, that what is true, and fit, and right in the christian world, is more or less distributed among all the sects that compose it. Every one is pursuing some good sentiment or object; and the fault, where it exists, is commonly seen in pushing this sentiment or object too far. Meanwhile, in the goodly order of Providence, these divisions are promoting investigation, liberality, forbearance, and every christian virtue. For let it not be forgotten, that there never was more religion in Christendom, than at this very moment, when there never were more sects.

II. Let us now turn to doctrines. Here we shall see, too, that men do not differ totally—that different opinions are not all error, and all truth; that error consists not in departing widely and palpably from truth, but in departing from its fair proportion—that error is, in fact, nothing but a modification of truth. It is not insanity, but misguided reason. It is not impiety, but conscientious misapprehension. And it is pleasing to observe, that men's chief regard is after all, placed not on the erroneous, but on the true principles of this faith.

A few instances will be sufficient to illustrate these remarks. There is one which readily offers itself in the doctrine of the Trinity. For it is in words only, or at most in speculation, that any are Trinitarians. Those who are thus denominated, believe that there is one God, as much as others—they believe that there is one Being one Mind, one Intelligence, and this is what we all believe. In their sober and earnest thoughts, *all* men are

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Unitarians. When they worship one God, the Father, through the one Mediator, Jesus Christ, it is impossible that they should be otherwise. Their great abiding, and practical sentiment, then, is a true one; and their error, as we think it, is only a modification of this truth.

Again, the death of Christ is justly a subject of great interest to all Christians. And they are very justly anxious lest they should detract from the importance of that merit in which the visible work of our redemption was consummated. All Christians, too, believe that he died for us—that he died in our behalf; and the appeal to their gratitude is strong, that they should not depreciate his sufferings. Now it is from these lawful and laudable feelings—it is from reverence, from gratitude, that any extravagant views have been entertained of the efficacy of these sufferings. It is not right, I am confident, to say that these views are generally adopted, to furnish an opiate for the conscience, to foster self-indulgence, to relieve the irksomeness of moral responsibility. And on the other hand, if some of us cannot go as far as the popular creed would require—I hope, it may be attributed, also, to a love of truth, to the fear of dishonoring God, to that caution and modesty which we think we ought to entertain about what is expedient and necessary in the infinite and eternal government of God.

Another doctrine to which we might apply the same general observations, is that of election. It is true that this doctrine has been agitated with much heat and passion. But still most of those who have believed it, have no doubt, verily thought that they therein magnified the grace of God. And there is moreover, a very interesting truth at bottom. It is true, that God from all eternity,

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purposed to bestow all the good that he ever did bestow, or ever will. And it is a truth that exalts his mercy and his glory. We hold this truth, indeed, with limitations. We believe that God designed to bestow moral good as moral, and physical good, as physical; and that he no more purposed to disregard man's freedom, in the gift of virtue, than to disregard his necessity, in the gift of food.

There is still another illustration on a very tender subject. It is found in the adherence which we witness, not to one doctrine or another, but to different systems of doctrine, and in controversy about them. Men are earnestly *opposed* to one another in their doctrinal belief. And why? I answer still from the love of truth. Not that angry disputation, not that low personalities, not that the attempts to make an adversary odious, not that passionate denunciations, and wholesale denials of the name of Christian, proceed from the love of truth. Very far from it. But in the better and more pious part of the community, there is a more serious and tender feeling, there is a conscientious and honest conviction, however mistaken, that they hold the truth, and that their adversaries maintain error. This credit we give to others, and we claim it for ourselves.

III. In the practical sentiments of men concerning religion, too, as in their speculative views; we shall discover the same regard to truth—to some truth in every sentiment, which is urged too far, or warped from its just proportion. We are not saying in all this, that men have all the love for truth which they ought to have; for there is undoubtedly a great and lamentable deficiency of conscientious, honest, independent regard for truth. But still they regard it: and many of their errors pro-

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ceed not from too much attachment to truth in general, but from carrying some one truth to excess.

Thus a careless man has his attention aroused to the subject of religion. It is with him a time of excitement, of anxiety, and perhaps of great alarm. He becomes distinctly and painfully conscious that he has neglected the great and momentous object of his existence, that he has neglected his soul, and displeased his Maker, and these convictions may well disturb him. At length he forms new resolutions—in contrition and prayer, and in the presence of God he forms them. And it is a time, though of trembling, yet of joy to him. He hopes, that he has commenced the progress of ever growing improvement and happiness. He feels that he lives anew, and he feels that this is an era in his life. And it is an era, of the most momentous character. He feels that the change is great and momentous, and it is great and momentous : it is so, in a measure which eternity only can reveal. Now, with this experience, a man will be very liable to extravagant and unwarrantable views of the doctrine of conversion. He will feel that every man ought to pass through the same kind of experience that *he* has passed through ; he will identify conversion with the process of his own emotions ; and whoever has not had a season of similar distress and anxiety, and subsequent joy, will seem to him to have no religion. In short, he has too much feeling, and too little reflection, to make the necessary distinction. He does not consider, sufficiently, that men may become good, by various means and processes, and that the doctrine of conversion needs to be preached in very different senses to different individuals ; and that to many, who have never had his ex-

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perience, the doctrine to be preached is not conversion, but advancement—not turning back from their present course, but pressing forward. And yet we are to say of this man, that he holds a most interesting truth, though perhaps, he so strongly grasps as to distort it.

About the proper evidence of piety, there are certain sentiments which might be adduced in this conviction. We have time only for one. We are told by some that it is absolutely and eminently necessary that we should feel that we are hateful in the sight of God; and not only so, but that our best affections and actions are regarded in the same light. And it is certainly true, and seriously true, that our lives are displeasing to God, and that our virtues are imperfect before him. There is something therefore correct and right at the foundation of these sentiments. But we think that a tender conscience, or a superstitious fear and awe, carries them too far. For it is certain, and worthy of the attention of many religionists among us, that there is no stronger language in scripture than that which describes God's complacency in human virtue, imperfect as it is. He loves the righteous—he delights in their ways, and he will express his regard to them, in an eternal recompense of reward. Yea, recompense, and reward—these are the terms that are applied to the future blessedness of the good. But do not these terms imply merit in human virtue? Undoubtedly, they do. Human virtue is excellent, and lovely, and meritorious, in the judgment of God. Not that man can deserve heaven and eternal happiness, or any thing like it. But he may merit some good, though he deserves much evil, also. Surely, if there can be such a thing as merit, in the universe, it

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must be found in that rectitude and piety which are steadfast amidst all the temptations of such a state as this. We cannot think too much of the effort, and toil, and preciousness of virtue. Why should we strive to depreciate so glorious an acquisition? Why look awfully upon its claims, as if the idea of its meritoriousness were a moral monster? Why so ready with our voluntary humility, or as that phrase of Paul might perhaps be better rendered, our volunteer humility—when so much is really demanded of us? For truly we have little occasion to be proud or presumptuous. We have every reason to be humble. And we *may* be humble, and yet humbly feel, that human virtue if we can obtain it, is precious and lovely, and that God will not unrighteously nor unreasonably reward it.

In fine, let the reflections which are here offered, admonish us against the extremes of opinion, and yet incline us to think *charitably* of the extremes of opinion. I know not who is altogether right; and I as little know who is altogether wrong. Because there are many sects, many doctrines, many practical notions, it follows, indeed, that some are mistaken, but it does not follow that any are knowingly perverse. There is doubtless a mixture of right and wrong among them all.

Among the ancients, there was a sect of philosophers, who gleaned their opinions from the various systems around them, and were called, from that circumstance, "eclectic philosophers." And I know not but it were our wisdom to be eclectic Christians. Certain I am that it is our duty to be modest, candid, and charitable Christians. Without these qualifications, we shall not keep the proportion of truth and faith in any sense. And

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with them, we may not be able to keep any other proportion, than the graceful order of an humble, benevolent, and tranquil mind. But with this we shall be happy, if not correct—safe, if not sure. D.

THE PARENTAL CHARACTER OF GOD.

We owe much to the instructions of Jesus on every subject that concerns our duty or happiness; but in no particular has his teaching a higher value than that part of it in which he declares the character of God. Such was his own knowledge on this subject, so profound and so intimate was his communion with God, that he is spoken of as being in the bosom of the Father. He assures us that no man knoweth the Father but the Son, and he to whom the Son shall reveal him. In language the most peculiar and striking, he refers to those disclosures of the divine being made to himself as the authority for all his declarations to mankind. And when he speaks to us of God, it is not with doubting, vague, obscure intimations, but with the clearness and directness of one who knew that all he said was true, who had acquired his information from a source that admitted no dispute. Add to this, he exhibited in his own conduct the fruits of a piety, such as those views of God he has given us, are adapted to produce, and which none other ever did or could inspire—a piety surpassing every model of moral excellence which the history of mankind can furnish. With entire confidence then, may we believe that God is what Jesus has assured us he is. And what is that? Our Father. This is the title which he applies to the Eternal

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Creator. And there is none more soothing, more attractive, more endearing. What name could express so much of every quality which our hearts most value in the objects of their veneration and love. It is the title most peculiarly christian. For the character of universal Father enters not into the idolatrous worship of ancient or modern heathenism. We meet indeed with appellations somewhat similar in ancient poetry and philosophy, but always in conjunction with other epithets, which shew that they were used more as beautiful fictions than sublime realities. The qualities and conduct which the name Father imports, are widely different from those attributed to the Pagan's deity. In the Old Testament the character is found in several instances—and all which it implies expressed in other language. But the great body of the Jews seem never to have apprehended its full meaning; and the general style of their historical and prophetical writings is replete with other titles more august and fearful; names, significant of grandeur, power, majesty, dominion:—the Lord God of hosts:—the King of glory:—the Lord mighty in battle:—the great and terrible God. We may collect from the whole book images as tender, and representations of the divine goodness as affecting as we could find in the other parts of scripture. But the common modes of address to God and the prevailing language concerning him, are of a kind adapted rather to inspire awe, veneration, and fear, than that confiding love which diffuses itself through the heart when we listen to Jesus Christ. Scarce any other title is employed by our Saviour when speaking of God, than that of a parent. And by him the divine character is represented in a manner corresponding to this tender relation. It may be well for

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us to analyze the name Father, as applied by Jesus to God; not that we may inform ourselves of its meaning, for it needs no interpretation; but that we may fill our minds with the delightful images it presents, and impress it anew on our inconstant hearts. Our Saviour has so used the title, that we cannot mistake in receiving it without any other modifications than those which divine perfection, contrasted with human weakness, demands.—God is our Father!

This term imports, first, a peculiarity in the connexion between us and him considered as his creatures. The other inhabitants of this lower world are the recipients of divine bounty, and the objects of divine care; but it is to man only that the Supreme Being assumes the relation of a Father. This indicates not only that we are of a higher nature than the rest, but of a nature kindred to Deity; we bear his image; as partakers of an intellectual, moral nature, we are the sons of God, who is the source of intelligence and virtue. This stamps the human soul with dignity, and should give infinite value to our powers in our own estimation. Men have fostered a foolish vanity upon the accidental circumstance of noble birth; and the history of the world is stained with crimes which flowed from a mad ambition to rise above the level of the race, and procure a splendid name.

There is even among the ordinary feelings, which rule the trifling incidents and affairs of common social life, a little of the same disposition, only exhibited on a diminutive scale. How much are we concerned about the figure we shall make—and what the world will think of us—and ten thousand other matters equally trifling. But what are all these to one who realizes that he is a child of God?

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What is humble parentage or humble fortune, the lowly dwelling and the undistinguished lot? And what are all the titles which grandeur boasts, and all the distinctions which crown the great ones of the earth with glory, when compared with the dignity of that relation which allows us to call God our Father?—Who will not wonder that human pride should feed itself on every species of garbage which folly or sin can collect, and that the possession of a soul, kindred to the Sovereign Lord of Heaven and Earth, should be scarcely felt as a cause of satisfaction.—Not, however, as a subject for pride does it concern us: but the consciousness of standing in a relation so ennobling and sublime, should banish from our minds all low and grovelling purposes and desires, and should cherish the generous ambition to attain that intellectual and moral worth which will not disgrace the exalted title of sons of God.

Secondly—The appellation, Our Father, manifests the disinterestedness and tenderness of the divine love for us. The ideas suggested by it, are not only that God is the source of our existence, and has made us in the image of his own eternity, but that he has that kind of affection and care for us which a wise and good parent is seen to have for his dependent children, and which is peculiarly disinterested. In the provision he makes for their wants—the vigilance with which he protects them—the solicitude he bestows on their welfare—a parent does not think of himself, nor calculate on the returns his sons may make for all he does for them. Delightful as are the hopes of their future advancement, they are delightful as relating to the child's good, and not as making a part of the parent's expected happiness; they would be delightful still, even

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if the parent felt within him already the workings of a disease, which must terminate his days long before those anticipations would be realized. No—there is no affection more disinterested than this. Its warmth is not chilled by the most untoward and perverse conduct of the child, nor its patience worn out by the most cruel recompense. Beginning with the life, it never terminates, nor can be extinguished in any good heart. The parable of the prodigal son beautifully expresses the nature of the sentiment. The cordiality of the wanderer's welcome was not checked by the remembrance of his base desertion of his father, and the ungrateful returns he had made for the kindness shewn to him: it seemed enough that he had repented and returned to his home, resolved to forsake it no more.

Thirdly—This appellation indicates the nature of the divine government. God presides over us as a father over his family. Every wise and faithful parent carefully adapts his mode of discipline, to the characters and dispositions of his children. He directs, encourages, controls, and restrains them as they require. He aims to shew no partiality, and requires of each only according to his years and capacity. The laws of his household having no other view but the maintenance of that order, purity, and love, which are essential to repose and happiness, are enforced with a gentleness and forbearance which may win and subdue, rather than compel to obedience. He is grieved, without being greatly surprised, at the faults of thoughtless and impetuous youth, and is more inclined to pity, than resentment. He eagerly watches for the smallest indications of improving virtue, and discovers them with the purest joy. No effort to please is lost upon him—no

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desire to do well is overlooked. If any are obstinate, perverse, and vicious, his anger is excited—but it is the anger of a father; it proceeds from affection, and is strong only in proportion to the sense he has of the injury the child is doing to himself. He thinks not of the instances of disobedience which he is obliged to punish, as they affect his own comfort, but as they affect the happiness of his family, and especially that of him who is the author of them. His severest chastisements have not revenge, as their object, but reformation—and are inflicted with a reluctance, which nothing could overcome, but duty. If the punishment inflicted be successful in recovering from guilt, the parent receives the returning offender with transports of joy, cheerfully pardons, and readily forgets the past misconduct, and is no more anxious but for his future well being. In proportion to the degrees of wisdom and goodness in a parent, do these sentiments and dispositions prevail.

And God is represented as acting towards us in perfect consistency with the same principles, in the gospel of his Son. Although he cannot share in the fears and agitations of human breasts, nor participate in those emotions of joy, or vexation, which disturb the mind of man, yet he has in this, as well as in many other instances, adopted the language of man to convey to us the assurance that he is the assiduous guardian of his children's happiness, the watchful spectator of their virtues;—that he delights in their improvement, and will reward it with a parent's liberality. His compassion for our frailties, his mercy for our repeated sins, will not be less than a wise and tender parent manifests. His laws are imposed with

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a purpose no less kind, and they will be enforced with no more severity than is needful to secure that end. He hates sin, because it brings misery into his family. He is angry with the wicked, because they disturb its harmony and order, and destroy its purity, while they are ruining themselves. But this anger is like the anger of a father—it is equally considerate—makes all just allowances, and inflicts only necessary punishments. And as a parent watches for the recovery of his erring child, God waits for the restoration of sinners, and equally delights in the happy termination of their offences, and chastisement. It is impossible to conceive of any thing more truly parental, than the language of the Father to us. In the gospel, menaces are sparingly, and, as it were, reluctantly used. Entreaties and encouragements are abundant. The most persuasive mildness—the most compassionate earnestness—a benignity unbounded, and a munificence unparalleled, are continually manifesting themselves. Joy, peace, and love pervade the whole. We are made to *feel* that God desires not the death of the wicked, but rather his repentance; that he *is* kind to the evil and unthankful.

Without pursuing the consideration of this subject further at present, we may derive from it several most important inferences.—And, in the first place, I would remark, that all systems of religion, professedly founded on the gospel, must be considered as defective in a principal point, if they do not perfectly coincide with the import of the name under which alone we are taught by Jesus to worship God, and which is the peculiar appellation given him in the christian dispensation. We have a right to complain of those who substitute for our Father,

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a being who exhibits nothing of a parent's disposition; and who borrow all their illustrations from princes, civil rulers, and earthly governments, instead of the parental relation. And that mode of preaching the gospel, which excludes the Father almost entirely from our view, and places Christ, our elder brother, in the most prominent place, is not evangelical preaching. The New Testament, and Jesus himself, points us continually to God, as the fountain of all the blessings communicated by Christianity. Let us adhere to this, and while we acknowledge as we ought, the value of Christ's labors and sacrifices for us, let us never direct to him the worship which he himself has taught us to offer only to the Father.

Secondly—The character of all sin is placed in its most odious light, by the consideration of God's government as truly parental. Never is disobedience more detestable, than when it is filial. It is an obvious fact, that an offender against civil power, and political sovereignty, is always held more excusable by the observer, than those who break the closer ties, and inflict injury on those to whom they are united in the nearer relations. If iniquity is represented only as rebellion against God in his character of sovereign, its baseness does not strike our hearts, as when it appears to the mind as the infringement of a Father's laws, a contempt of parental authority, an ungrateful return for parental goodness. Let us then learn to regard our offences in this light, that we may perceive their true character, and that we may be excited to abhor evil, and beware of it.

Thirdly—Obedience also derives a new character from the view of the divine relation to us. Should we think so much of the smallest instance of duty, if we felt for

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whose sake we discharged that duty? Filial obedience to an affectionate and beloved parent, is surely not a hard service. It is delightful to such as make it habitual, even in its hardest requisitions. If we have been backward and reluctant, hitherto, in God's service, let us strive to quicken our interest and zeal by contemplating him in the tender character in which he is represented in the Gospel.

Again—our hopes and expectations from futurity acquire new strength and confidence from the consideration suggested by the name, Our Father. If it be indeed as a parent that God rules our destiny, what shall we fear? "Which of you being a father, if his son ask bread would give him a stone?" And why then be so doubtful, and suspicious, and distrustful in your dependence on God? Let us open our hearts to better feelings. Let us commit ourselves to his keeping with no less confidence of our security, than we should have in placing ourselves under the direction of a wisdom so inferior, and a goodness so feeble. Solicitous ever to possess the character which belongs to the children of God, let us cherish a childlike submission to our Father in heaven, under every allotment.

And let us not forget that exhortation which holy scripture addresses to us in our character of sons of God. "Beloved, if God so loved us we ought also to love one another. Let us love one another, for love is of God." How does every mild, gentle, and kind affection harmonize with the name of brethren of one family. The domestic virtues so cherished by him who desires a peaceful and happy home, are but images of those christian graces which tend to make a peaceful and happy world. Would to God, that society might be more penetrated by

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their spirit, and that the christian community at least, might seem more like the family of Heaven.

[The following is from the Manuscript of JOHN BOWRING, ESQ. It purports to be in part a translation from a beautiful Hymn of Novalis, used in some of the churches in Germany.]

O WITHOUT Thee, my Father, Thee,
What am I, or what should I be?
A child of grief, and doubt, and care,
A lonely stranger, wandering here,
With nought but earthly love to cheer,
And nought but darkness o'er tomorrow—
And none in sorrows' moment near,
To whom I might unveil my sorrow.

There was a day of joy and love
When all was bright around, above;
Then came the days of griefs and tears
As I bent down the vale of years;
And tumult's wearying minister,
And hopes o'erwhelm'd, and blessings riven;
O! who could bear earth's storms and fears
Without some better friend in heaven?

Now sweetly from thy heavenly throne
The gospel beams descended down,
And o'er time's vale of darkness threw
New rays of light and glory too;
Then first the germe of gladness grew
Within me, and my soul desiring
Some bliss all worthy to pursue,
Rose, on the wings of faith aspiring.

And then it seem'd as if the light
Of heaven, made earth more gay and bright;
And every flower that blossom'd round,
Pour'd balsam forth for every wound,

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A thousand, thousand joys I found
And wept, and pray'd—with strong emotion;
And felt that every utter'd sound
Reach'd thee, when wafted by devotion.

Go forth—go forth, in every walk,
And call the erring wanderers back;
Stretch out—stretch out thy gracious hand,
And pour thy light on every land;
And make the people understand
That heaven is now on earth descended;
That men must be one happy band,
All tongues, all tribes, all nations blended.

Tear from our yielding hearts within
The old and withering roots of sin,
And lead us from life's midnight way,
With thine own pure, thy perfect ray;
What peace, what pleasure to "obey,"
And in the very scenes which gave us
Thoughts full of darkness and dismay,
Find hopes to cheer, and faith to save us.

O we were trembling prisoners bound
With iron fetters to the ground;
Haunted by dreams, the mournfullest,
And spectred shapes, and sights unblest,
A heavy weight upon our breast,
The weight of doubts and fears was lying;
And even the sweetest hope of rest
Could not subdue the dread of dying.

When lo! the great deliverer came
And lighted in our hearts a flame
Of hope, of joy—an effluence bright
From Him, the very source of light;
All heaven was open'd on our sight,
And all its joys in prospect given;
O vision of supreme delight!
For sons of God, for heirs of heaven.

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And calmly now our footsteps tread,
Ev'n midst the ruins of the dead;
Those ruins—rear'd by God—will be
The temples of eternity;
And life's light scenes so swiftly flee
When o'er them hope immortal towers,
That even the path of misery
Is hung with lamps, and strew'd with flowers.

"SPIRIT OF THE PILGRIMS."

A RELIGIOUS periodical with the title placed above, has just made its appearance in Boston, under the formally announced sanction of the body of Christians denominated orthodox. In the first number of this work there are some things to which we wish to draw the attention of our readers.

No person in this community can have failed to observe a growing disposition in the orthodox party, to appropriate exclusively to themselves the appellation of "Children of the Pilgrims." In this publication we have the claim set forth in words. "Looking at the present state of things among all the classes of professed Christians in our community, *the orthodox feel themselves to be the proper and legitimate representatives of their pilgrim fathers.*" By this we must understand, that as they think, on them alone has descended the spirit of our common ancestry. They only have not forfeited the birthright of New Englandmen. But for them, there would remain no examples of the virtues and the principles of the founders of our republic. Such is the claim which our fellow citizens are called upon to acknowledge.

On what grounds rests this bold and sweeping assump-

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tion, covering with the disgrace of degeneracy a large portion of this community, and asserting a privilege which strikes deep at the foundations of public tranquility? Simply upon this. Our pilgrim fathers held as sacred truths the doctrines known as Calvinism. And the orthodox now are the only Calvinists. This one point of resemblance is to confer on them a right to monopolize the whole title to the inheritance of fame, which has come down to us from the pilgrims. And are the people of New England prepared to sanction this monopoly? Shall pretensions so wide in their relations and so important in their natural consequences, be admitted on so slender grounds? Is this whole commonwealth moved away from its ancient foundations, so far as it has in any manner countenanced or cherished any other religious tenets than the orthodox? Has it dishonored the pilgrim fathers by fostering their college, after its governors became men of a liberal faith? Has it violated its own pure character, by permitting its metropolis to become the seat of a Unitarian belief? Is our glory clean gone, because a man may represent his fellow-citizens in the General Court, and yet not be a member of a calvinistic church?

We have been wont to suppose that the Pilgrims came to this fair land, not that they might be Calvinists, but that they might be freemen. They sought an asylum for their consciences, not for their creeds. Orthodox religious opinions were by no means peculiar to themselves. Other countries abounded in such opinions, and would have nourished them heartily, but for some other conjoined sentiments, not so well favored. If our ancestors were mainly intent on propagating their peculiar creed, we have marvellously mistaken their history.

There is no cause to question that the *peculiar* doc-

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trines of the Pilgrims, those which occasioned their voluntary exile, were liberty to believe and worship as conscience might suggest; and liberty to be governed in their own way, by their own chosen rulers; these were the blessings which they could *not* have at home. These were the blessings they hoped to gain by emigration. Calvinists they might have been anywhere else. Freemen they could not be to the extent of their desire. The spirit of civil and religious liberty was the spirit which inspired our fathers. And we think it a poor token of their children's fondness for their memory and respect for their principles, to substitute in the place of this anything else, as if that were the inheritance which alone they were anxious to entail.

That sect which shall first avail itself of numbers, wealth, and power, to encroach by any means upon the rights of conscience, will be the first to cast a blot upon the fame of the Pilgrims. And they who shall most strongly resist such encroachments, and shall strive most earnestly that the people of *every* denomination may enjoy unmolested, *perfect religious freedom*, will ever have the proud consciousness that they have well *imitated* their glorious sires, in that part of their character which has given them their name in the earth.

We find in the periodical which occasions these remarks some heavy charges against Unitarians, which we now proceed to notice.

Having brought up the Panoplist, a Magazine published from A. D. 1805 to A. D. 1820, as an example of what good may accrue from such works as the one now proposed, the editor proceeds to state that it rendered incalculable service to the cause of faith "*by compelling Uni-*

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tarians to leave the concealment by which they had so long been gaining influence."—Here we have an impeachment of the moral honesty of such men as Buckminster, Thacher, Cary, and the revered Dr Freeman, to name no others. These men were basely seeking influence in the community by a concealment of their true sentiments. The charge is utterly false. There *was* no such concealment. The whole truth is simply this. These clergymen, and Unitarians generally, did not think those points of doctrine on which different opinions were entertained among Christians, the *essential principles* of religion, those which men ought to be instructed in, and must be instructed in, for the sake of their salvation. They believed that a Trinitarian held all the *vital* truths, notwithstanding his errors. They had no wish to trouble their people with their speculations on disputed topics. They esteemed and respected their orthodox fellow laborers, and had no desire to withdraw from their fellowship. They supposed that to leave every man to investigate for himself was the most prudent course *for the peace* of the churches. They did not therefore *preach* on controverted topics. Whatever influence they gained was gained by their pious care to teach things necessary to godliness, avoiding those which might produce strife. Every body who knew the men, knew they were not Calvinists. They did not preach Calvinism. They preached what Unitarians now preach, save only that they touched not disputed doctrines. Was this dishonest concealment? Was it concealment at all? Were their people ever deceived as to their purposes? Had they any other purposes than to promote piety and virtue?

The Societies now united in a Unitarian ministry are

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not made up of *new* men. There are but a few who were not as much Unitarians at the period the Panoplist was in vogue, as now. If their pastors *had* deceived them, would the discovery of such a cheat have made no change in them? Would they still have been happy to enjoy the same ministry, for all the Panoplist could then say, and all which like publications have since said, of Unitarian concealment? The pillars of our metropolitan churches now are mostly the very men who were thus egregiously imposed upon some twelve years ago. How happens it that this fraud was never complained of by those on whom it was practised?

Sad indeed is it for us, that the time has gone by, when abstaining from controversy was deemed more a virtue than a vice. We who see the consequences of a different course, may hardly help wishing that preaching had always included discussions of the Trinity and the five Calvinistic points, instead of being confined, as it was, to merely practical divinity. Yet shall we never blush to own that for the peace of the church our predecessors in the ministry were content to be silent in the desk for a season, about polemic differences. We can refer to the letter of Rev. Dr Channing to Mr Thacher, and to a sermon of the latter on the Unity of God, for a complete refutation of this calumny at the time it was uttered.

But our orthodox editor goes further. He intimates more heinous sins in Unitarian pastors. After saying that the people of Massachusetts are a thinking race of men, he observes,—"and though *opiates have long been administered to the conscience*, and much reproach has been thrown on discriminating views of religion, still a state of torpor is to them an unnatural state." And is it

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thus orthodoxy compliments? Will our citizens allow that they have been dosed with opiates by the men they appointed to be their spiritual guardians? Is this the charity that thinketh no evil? All other doctrine but Calvinism is but a potion to destroy the soul! And this deadly mixture is deliberately administered to their wretched flocks by Unitarian clergymen! How will the thinking people of our good commonwealth account for *their own* stupidity in preferring these ministers of death to the charge they so abuse, and continuing them in it so long at the peril of their souls?

Another allegation not less remarkable is "that a large portion of this community have been totally deceived in regard to the doctrines and preaching of the orthodox; misrepresentations the most palpable and injurious, of the doctrines, preaching, and motives of the orthodox, have been common for many years.—The apparent object has been to *keep the members of Unitarian congregations from entering the doors of an orthodox church*, and this has to a very unhappy extent been the effect hitherto." Coupled with this is the assertion that "Unitarians have been generally slow and reluctant to tell definitely what they themselves believe."

We are unfeignedly astonished. How can a rational man persuade himself that a class of Christians who never openly avowed their own belief, could yet lead a community like ours blindfold, and keep them from ever learning what orthodoxy was, in orthodox churches, by palming on them false accounts of what it was, in their own. Is this consistent with the character of a thinking people, so flatteringly bestowed on them by this writer?

What these misrepresentations are, he has not specified. We cannot discover them. Having for some years habit-

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ually consulted every orthodox publication which was thrown in our way, we confess we see no difference between what they say, and what Unitarians have said, *is* orthodoxy. The very creed inserted in this Spirit of the Pilgrims, expresses precisely what we find represented in works on the opposite side.

The fact is, Unitarians have always appealed to books of acknowledged authority, and to preaching "which was not done in a corner," as evidence of their sentiments. The public had access to all these sources of information, and *could* not be hindered from judging, how far the testimony which we relied upon was good. It is idle to talk of our keeping away our brethren from orthodox churches. The thing is ridiculous. Every man goes to church where and when he pleases, in Massachusetts, if nowhere else. This whole controversy has been open as day to the reading and observing portion of our citizens. They have probably judged fairly between the parties. If not, we suppose the blame may be shared pretty equally.

Who has forgotten the following words of an eminent divine, in relation to Unitarians. They are a specimen of what has been common, and is now common in orthodox pulpits. They are from a sermon by Dr Mason of New York, upon quitting his pastoral charge.

"Above all things, it is devoutly to be hoped, that you will never invite to the 'care of your souls,' a man who cares nothing about them. I mean, more particularly, for I would not be misunderstood, a man who belongs to that rank of traitors who miscal themselves 'rational Christians.' Against these men *I have ever warned you*, as the enemies of our Lord Jesus Christ, and all that is valuable in his religion, and peculiar in his salvation. I know well that this congregation is considered by them as the very focus of what they term bigotry; and I do rejoice that thus far I and you have been counted worthy to suffer shame for his name. Long may it continue so! Long may it be thought a hopeless case to attempt to bring you over to the fellowship of devils. Though I would not slander

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the devil: he promotes his work, as the destroyer, not by tempting men to his belief, but by persuading them to embrace what he does not believe—what is too coarse and abominable for hell itself; and what the philosophical Christians shall find to be so, when they get to their own place. The pretences of these men to kindness and candor, and love, are all hollow. They mean to make proselytes of you, and twofold more the children of hell than themselves. O keep at a distance from them! Furthest from them, and their charity, is best. Come not near their ice, never to be melted but in that fire which shall not be quenched."

Such is the way in which orthodox preachers have *spoken of Unitarians*, to their own congregations. And can anything like it be produced on our side? No. We have one and all been ready and happy to acknowledge Calvinists as Christians, on the ground of a Christian character merely. While they *would*, we were in the habit of interchanging ministerial labors. When fellowship was broken between the two denominations, it was broken by the orthodox only, and not by our choice or consent. Every act by which the breach has been widened, has been the fruit of orthodox zeal.

A part of the plan of the Spirit of the Pilgrims is to confound American Unitarians with German Deists. This is an act of injustice too gross to be overlooked. We were shocked at the coolness with which it is perpetrated. When German theology began to be more generally known in this country, some remarks were made by the Rev. Professor Stuart in his letters to Dr Channing, very highly in praise of the learning and talent of some of the wildest theorists on the Continent. These men had written deistical works, and Dr Stuart had read them. His praise of their learning would naturally detract something from his rebuke of their audacious attacks on Christianity. The gentleman who reviewed his letters in the

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Christian Disciple, spoke disparagingly of these learned Germans; took off the whole of the compliment paid them at Andover; and utterly disclaimed their theology. Besides this, we believe the deistical works imported for the Seminary at Andover from Germany, far outnumber all which could be found in Cambridge. If any leaning to the foreign theology may fairly be imputed in the one case it may be also in the other.

But in good truth, there is in this country no such thing as a theology like that of Wegscheider, and others abroad, Christian evidences have never been more powerfully urged and supported, than by avowed Unitarians. A firmer attachment to Revelation exists nowhere than among Unitarians. The attempt to draw upon them the odium of secret or avowed enmity to Christianity as a revealed religion, is utterly futile, while in Buckminster's and Channing's sermons we can read a defence so eloquent, of its divine authority. The text books on this subject, of most value, are all the production of men of like religious faith. And we think it argues nothing against Unitarianism, that in casting off orthodoxy the German theologians rushed to the opposite extreme. It was orthodoxy which disgusted them with Christianity.

The 'Spirit of the Pilgrims' comes out with a warlike aspect, and abounds in that sort of threatening which a purpose of attack and defence at close quarters, may seem to warrant. It more than insinuates that already the question has sprung up, whether the Bible is any longer to be the ultimate appeal in religious differences. Nay, it openly asserts of Unitarians that they do, as far as they dare, deny the divine authority of the sacred Scriptures.

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What is the tendency of all this? To overawe and intimidate. To fasten a stigma on their opponents which shall make them odious in the eyes of ignorant men. To prepossess the public mind with a prejudice, which may serve to blunt all argument. To create a strong party spirit which shall avail to the support of exclusive measures in Church and in State too; if that ascendancy in civil affairs should be gained, to which a religious supremacy is the first step.

We lament that a hostile spirit should be so unweariedly fostered in this community. The little which individuals can do toward conciliation and peace is perpetually undone by the zealous partizans who lead their sect. What would the orthodox have? Must we give up our faith? They cannot expect it. Do they wish us to be silent on the great articles in dispute? No. Then they would cry out again about dishonest concealment. If we defend our opinions and our characters we are equally reproached. How then *can* peace be restored and cherished? It has come to this; that *no* man who is not a Calvinist shall escape the treatment which is thought to be due to a *subverter* of all religion. We must either become orthodox, or consent to be the objects of a ceaseless persecution, sparing neither character, conscience, nor feeling; destroying our usefulness in all possible ways; and branding us till death, as the enemies of God.

STEPHEN THE MARTYR'S DYING WORDS.

It is known to every one that an argument for the deity of Jesus is raised from the dying words of the martyr

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Stephen, as recorded in the Acts of the Apostles. We will consider the grounds on which this plea rests. It is only necessary to look attentively at the whole passage relied upon, to see that if it teaches any thing on the subject, we learn from it the inferiority of Jesus to God.

Stephen "being full of the holy ghost, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God; and said,—Behold I see the heavens opened, and the son of man *standing on the right hand* of God."

This is the beginning of the passage. And does this prove Jesus to be God—that God at whose right hand he stood? We are aware that it has lately been urged that Christ's being at the right hand of God, indicates that he shares the divine sovereignty. But let us see to what this would lead us. In the second book of Chronicles, 18th chapter, we read in the words of Micaiah, "I saw the Lord sitting upon his throne, and all the host of heaven *standing on his right hand* and on his left."—Were these heavenly beings *all* deities? If standing at the right hand of God proves a participation in the divine sovereignty, they assuredly were.

To proceed with the text. Stephen was instantly assaulted in a most violent manner, when he had declared his vision. And they stoned him, "calling upon God, and saying Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." We perceive here no evidence that Stephen's calling upon Jesus indicates anything more than an act of faith in him as the resurrection and the life, an act peculiarly befitting a dying man. It is worthy of remark that Michael Servetus called thus upon Jesus

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when in the agonies of martyrdom, a death incurred in consequence of his belief that his Lord was *not* the deity. Our translation may lead some astray by attaching to the phrase "calling upon" the name "God" in which it departs from the original, which has not the sacred appellation in that connexion. Stephen might invoke Christ and yet not address him as his God. Especially may we urge this since he has himself in a distinct manner separated between the two objects. Not only is this done in the preceding context. It is no less plain in that which follows, if a proper prayer be there supposed. After the invocation of Jesus, the martyr kneeled. This would seem to show a distinct purpose and an address to another being. If we consider the kneeling to have been a deliberate devotional thing, and not the result of circumstances, we see not how this inference can be avoided. Why kneel after his first invocation, and not before, if each time he addressed the same being?

The chief cause of ambiguity, on the supposition that Stephen's words imply a prayer, lies not however so much in what Stephen said or did, as in his using the appellation "Lord" both when he invoked Jesus and in the second exclamation. But it needs nothing more than a comparison of other passages with this, to shew that the writer of the Acts does not apply the title to Jesus, in its highest acceptation. The word denotes by itself the relation of a master, proprietor, sovereign. It is given in scripture to other superiors besides God and Christ. It might take the place of "master" in many cases where the sentence is so constructed, or the subject of it is of such a kind as to preclude all ideas connected with an act of religious adoration.

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It is true that in prayers recorded in this book and elsewhere, God is addressed by the simple name "Lord," as he is supposed to be here. It is equally true that Christ is thus addressed before his ascension, in a mere interrogation. And when applied in other ways to him, we see at once the word has not all its force, as when applied to the divine being. "The Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou on my right hand until *I make* thy foes thy footstool." "God hath made that same Jesus whom ye have crucified both Lord and Christ."—"The kings of the earth stood up against the Lord and against his Christ." In the last text the distinction between God, *the Lord*, and his Christ is clear. No less so is it in the preceding. No writer could have supposed him to be *the* Lord, who was made Lord, that is, derived his superiority and title to dominion in his church, from another, and if another, a higher being.

Some who suppose the invocation of Christ by Stephen might possibly alone indicate no religious adoration, are yet inclined to think it must here, because it is so immediately connected with what seems a proper prayer to God. But we ask, is it not said respecting the Hebrews that they worshiped the Lord and the King, at the same moment? And does not even Aaron, his brother, pray to Moses thus—"Alas! my Lord, I beseech thee, lay not the sin upon us, wherein we have done foolishly, and wherein we have sinned."—*Num.* xii. 11.

It is often urged against us, that Christ is associated by the sacred writers in a manner so peculiar that it "would shock us to hear" other names thus associated. But in truth, other names and far inferior names too, *are* thus associated in a manner not less remarkable. To in-

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stance again in Moses. He thus speaks to Israel. "If ye shall hearken diligently unto my commandments which I command you this day, to love the Lord your God;—*I will give* you the rain of your land, *and I will give you* the grass in your fields."—*Deut.* xi. 13, 14. It was told him at the first, "thou shalt be instead of God" to Aaron. He gives the law to the people afterward in *his own* name, saying, "I command you." He sometimes utters the sanctions of that law in his own name, saying, "I have set before thee this day, life and good, death and evil; in that I command you to love the Lord;—But if thine heart turn away I denounce unto you this day that ye shall surely perish." The prophet's style, from the very nature of his work, must frequently present such peculiarities; and we think it very natural that he should lose himself in his subject, and when speaking *for* God, speak *as* God. Much more is this to be expected in him who is above all the other messengers of Heaven; who sustains the nearer and more ennobling relation of a beloved Son, the sinless representative of his Father among men.

Our blessed Lord has associated with himself and with God, those whom he appointed to be his apostles, in a manner which cannot be accounted for, if such an association is only proper where equality is supposed.—"He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me." "As thou has sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world." And St Paul says to the Galatians, "ye received me as an angel of God, *even as* Christ Jesus." To the Corinthians also he expresses himself thus: "I verily, as present in spirit, have judged already as though I were present, concerning him that hath so done this deed; in the name

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of our Lord Jesus Christ when ye are gathered together, *and my spirit*, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, to deliver such an one to Satan."

How could the Apostle justify this blending of his own name and acts with the name and power of Jesus, if Jesus was his Creator and God? But the argument which justifies Paul, would explain all the language which seems to connect Jesus with God so as to imply equality between them. And if Moses could properly say "I will give you rain," to the people, thus assuming a divine prerogative and a divine work, as his own, because of his relation to God and the Hebrews as a mediator; then may the *one* Mediator between God and man be spoken of as exercising the same divine power and authority, and yet not be declared thereby, an omnipotent, omnipresent, self-existent being.

[For the Unitarian Advocate.]

"YE SHALL SEEK ME IN THE MORNING; BUT I SHALL NOT BE."—*Job.*

WHEN a few days their glimmering light hath shed,
A few more nights their sable mantle spread,
Like the dense cloud, which summer suns consume,
I shall dissolve, and vanish in the tomb.
—As the swift shuttle to its guidance true,
As the wild winds that mock the gazer's view,
Onward I press to that oblivious bourne,
From whence no voice doth sigh, no step return;—
And when the shroud of midnight's vesture fades,
When morning trembles through incumbent shades,
A few fond hearts my image may retain,
And seek me sorrowing,—but shall seek in vain. H.

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LETTERS OF AN ENGLISH TRAVELLER ON REVIVALS OF RELIGION IN AMERICA.

THERE are many things we should probably estimate more fairly, if we could know how they strike a stranger. This remark may apply particularly to those singular phenomena, which have been always a part in the descriptions of what are termed "revivals;" these have no chance for a just exposition in the hands of persons who describe rather what they participated than what they observed. Nor do they fare better with others who have indeed no personal concern in them, but yet must have prejudged them as partizans, because they are of sects who have not permitted or sought "awakenings," or belong to that greater class who are hostile to these excitements, from constitutional coldness, or aversion to earnest piety in every form.

The Letters from our Englishman seem to us to come as near to a calm, dispassionate, intelligent, and serious judgment, as is to be expected. Their object is rather to describe than explain. But there is often a very fine remark upon occurrences related, by which light is thrown on the general subjects affected by them. In truth we have here an account of revivals to which one who seeks information as to what they are, and what are their results and tendencies, may be safely directed.

We feel confident, from comparing his statements with what we have ourselves known respecting these "awakenings," that this author has rightly characterized them. He gives us many very interesting facts which shew a close and an honest observation. He is as careful to tell what is favorable, as what wears a different aspect.

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There is here no indiscriminate censure. The observer has separated things accidental from the more essential and universal phenomena. His thoughts are not thrown off in haste, but have the weight of mature reflections. He writes seriously, yet in a cheerful and easy style. Without a particle of bitterness he tells of evil conduct, and blind errors; and while rigidly just, is temperate and conciliatory. Above all is there no rude sporting with that which is solemn in itself, however degraded by unfortunate alliances. There is a sincere reverence for conscience, even the deluded conscience of the bigot and enthusiast. And we are not made to forget that after all, an attempt to revive religion in decayed souls, is a work for the good and the wise to foster wherever they can consistently do it, by zealous efforts and by fervent prayers.

SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

INFLUENCE OF SUNDAY SCHOOLS ON SOCIETY.

Gratifying as it may be to see the many advantages resulting from Sunday schools, and the good effected by them within our own observation, still to know how far their influence extends, will not only greatly increase our pleasure, but show that they well deserve all the aid and support that is given them. We propose therefore, to exhibit in some measure that effect on society, which we consider to be an important feature in these institutions. Perhaps in doing this we may be able to convince

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those, who are doubtful of their utility, and to give new stimulus to the efforts of those who are engaged in them. We would hope also that such a view of the subject may prevent the teachers from confining their attention within the narrow limits of the school in which they are engaged, and by opening to them a more extensive prospect of the influence they are exercising, inspire them with new courage to persevere.

It is well known that the situation of many of the children who attend these schools, is such, that it is impossible they should receive religious instruction unless it be given them at a Sunday school. Burthened as their parents are by domestic duties, and the many cares attending poverty, they have no time for such a task; they are indeed in many cases insensible of its importance, and if their children obey them with tolerable docility, they ask no more. In the lowest classes of society, therefore, what is there to counteract the power of temptation? A child has nothing to deter him from vice except the fear of instant punishment. It may be that the age of childhood passes unmarked, but the youthful mind has not remained inactive, the seeds of vice have been sown. Perhaps the timidity natural to this period of life still remains, and guards it for a time from open violation of the laws of society; but every temptation weakens this feeble restraint, until at length it yields, and a decided step is taken in the path of vice.

These remarks apply also to a class of persons, who are not placed in a situation of absolute dependence—who find their daily wants supplied, who are ambitious to have their children attend school, and desirous to promote their improvement. But it is by hard industry that this

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is accomplished. The father is constantly at work, and the mother finds it no small task to attend to the merely temporal wants of her family. They may feel that more should be done, but they want the time and the ability to do it. They desire to embrace some opportunity to instil into the minds of their children religious principles, to point out the path of duty, to speak of their little faults, and to have them overcome, but the constant and imperious calls of their various occupations render this nearly impracticable. After a day of labor they are not like many permitted to enjoy the comforts of a social fireside; with them the time for rest only comes when nature is exhausted, and they must repose. While they are industriously employed, the hours for amusement are spent by their children, with their playmates who are not particularly inquired about, or known to their parents; and as disobedience is seen not instantaneously, and vice in all its train comes not in a day, they are unheeded until too late. The first act of disobedience is witnessed with astonishment, and meets a merited rebuke, but it is soon forgotten. It passes inperceptibly from one degree to another, till it is found necessary to resort to punishment. Incautious methods are adopted—an attempt is made to excite fear which only meets a stern repulse, and the strength of authority is met with an equally stern resistance. Nearly disheartened, the troubled parent tries the mild accents of love, and reasons with feeling and affection, which if tried at first might have been successful, but now a deaf ear is turned to such gentle admonitions. The causes which led to this desperation are easily told. The first transgressions were not properly attended to—religious principles were not implanted in

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the mind to prevent its being overcome by those temptations which it met on every side; its companions and associates were unknown. Free and uncontrolled, it was left to its own inclinations, and these propensities, which had gained an ascendency in the mind, could not be at once eradicated. The authority of the parent was soon overcome, and with the vicious companions who lured them on to ruin, they go forth into society and become its pests. They do not fall singly, for as no one is without the power of giving an impulse either for vice or virtue, so even these pitiable youths have an influence. Their example seduces others—the circle enlarges, until the strong arm of the law secures them after having been the destroyers of many, who but for them would have still been virtuous and happy. And in how many instances has it been necessary for the parents themselves, to call in the aid of the law.—Suffering like theirs can hardly be comprehended but by those who have witnessed them.

Well might the philanthropist try to do something in so good a cause, as that of rescuing immortal beings from moral death, who are thus verging toward destruction and drawing others with them. There are objects enough on all sides to excite his compassion and stimulate his efforts—there is sickness and suffering, poverty and distress; but even these calamities are light when compared with this moral degradation of the youthful mind—this total disregard of parental authority and this career of wickedness, which the arm of justice which stays the offender in his course, alone has power to arrest. Well may he say when he sees this, that his exertions are almost ineffectual, for they came too late. Well may he ponder and consider, and on reflecting ask

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with earnestness, why not attend to these evils in season? why not prevent them before they gain such an ascendency over the character? why not sound the alarm, when they who suffer are willing to hear and avoid the danger? He asks also, when does the evil commence? Can the first signs of deviation be seen, or are they so imperceptible, that they obtain absolute power before they are known to be within reach, or does it like the gourd of the prophet, spring up in a night? He asks for the means of obviating such fearful evils, and the experience of ages gives him the answer. It is by instilling into the minds of the young the pure precepts of the gospel—it is by diffusing light and the liberty to use it. It is not to the hardened and habitual offender that we could address expostulation with the most sanguine hope of success. It is in childhood that the first deviations from rectitude must be checked, and reverence of God's laws taught. It is in youth that we must implant religion, if we would have the man go forth into society possessing those principles, which shall render him a deserving member of it. Without this guard many a harmless and innocent youth goes forth into the community open to deception, ready to be drawn into crime, and unarmed against idleness and the many temptations and snares which are its attendants.

If such be the state of the destitute—such the evils to which they are necessarily exposed, and if the remedy is to be found only in that moral instruction which, from their situation they are unable to give their children themselves, then it is the duty of those who have the power, to exercise it; and we think no institutions can so well perform this benevolent work as Sunday schools—

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those institutions raised and supported by the hand of the benevolent, and where that instruction so all-important will be cheerfully imparted to them.

> "Where like a stream, beside whose watery bed
> Some blooming plant exalts his flowery head,
> Nursed by the wave, the spreading branches rise,
> Shade all around, and flourish to the skies."

We mark with the greatest pleasure the cheerfulness and alacrity with which our youth attend the public schools, for which so ample provision is made, and where important instruction is so carefully imparted to them. We look upon this with unmingled satisfaction. But there are lessons far more important, lessons which shall leave an eternal impression. These are given at the Sunday school.—Yes, and given by those who seek to follow the example—to cherish the love which animated the soul of him, who took little children in his arms and blessing them said "of such is the kingdom of heaven." The principles of virtue are here impressed on the heart and carried into life. A deviation from duty is felt by the child, for it recalls to his mind the kind advice of its teacher,—advice, which while it has won the affection of the pupil has led him to understand the consequences of offending, and a holy reverence for that Being who cannot look without displeasure on the faults of his creatures. A regard and love for this friend is a barrier to sin; and will not the thought of that eye which is ever upon them, of that Being so wise and good to them, come to the mind, and amidst their temptations induce them to say,—how can I sin against my God?

Such an impression is indelible, and by proper nurture it grows with their growth, and strengthens with their

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strength. It preserves the days of childhood in innocence and virtue, those of youth in industry and cheerfulness, and obedience to God's law, and when at length manhood comes and the character is formed, his thoughts, words, and actions will have a constant reference to the will of Him who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, and with a will resigned to every dispensation of his providence.

You ask if this influence can be obtained.—Oh yes, doubt not that it has and can be obtained. It is the tender twig and not the sturdy oak that you have to bend, and it yields with every passing wind; and we have only to recall the following singular fact to show how great the influence of these institutions is, "that scarcely a felon had been convicted in Great Britain or America who had enjoyed the privilege of a Sunday School."* We would say more on this subject if more were needed to shew the value of these institutions, but we forbear.

Teacher—go on in this work in which you are engaged. If to impart a knowledge of the scriptures,—to aid the cause of religion—to benefit the civil relations of society, is pleasing in the sight of God—if lisping infancy and hoary age will through your instrumentality, be brought within the pale of religious instruction, and their tottering steps conducted to the source of light, then may you with confidence continue to labor in this good cause, and doubt not, "that in due time you will reap if you faint not."

R.

* A Report on Sunday Schools, made in 1825.

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RELIGIOUS TEACHING IS CHARITY.

While we hear much, and feel much, for the sufferings of the poor, we also take great comfort in the thought that they have their hours of happiness; but we are convinced that these hours might be greatly increased. Much can be done, and is done by the immediate relief that money and friends may bring, but both of these sources may fail, and can rarely be depended upon for a continuance. The happiness we would have them enjoy should spring from no outward cause, but from that inexhaustable source, their own minds. We are apt to think and speak of the poor, as a class of beings, whose outward misfortunes have penetrated the holy temple within, and that the poverty and privations which rest upon their dwellings have sent their withering influence to the heart, and shut their minds into the same limited sphere with their own narrow dwellings. We do not believe that this is a just view of their case. It is not said that God made the *rich* man in his own likeness, but *man*, and if by unfortunate circumstances, he is placed in a situation where he does not enjoy so many of the pleasures and comforts of this world as many of his fellow beings, he has still this holy impress of the divine image; this immortal inmate which tells him of his destiny.

That poverty, disease, and want may be so importunate as to render the individual who suffers from them deaf to his calling, is no doubt true; but is it not also true that they can only stifle, not destroy the spirit that tells him of his immortality? Our exertions should then be used to acquaint such of this great truth, or rather to lead them to turn their attention to it, and thus to make them feel that

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they can create for themselves their own happiness; to lead them to the knowledge that the spirit of God is within, to sustain and comfort them in this world, while it leads them to another. If these feelings are roused early, the mind will grow up strong in the faith that looks through present darkness, to scenes of future happiness. If we excite the minds of the poor to the contemplation of this great truth, we have imparted to them treasures that will never fail, with which they can purchase a happiness perhaps surpassing what their benefactors have yet attained. Our Sunday schools can in this way remove mountains of misery, by teaching the children that the great Father of all has implanted the same mind in all his children, has given the same source of happiness. We should make them feel while instructing them, that we have touched a chord of the same mind that is enlightening their ignorance, and are only putting them in tune to enjoy the peace and harmony of heavenly thoughts.

Our Saviour first appeared to men in the lowly manger; it was there that he, who came to reveal the way, the truth, and the life, was worshipped. Thus to show us, that the happiness he came to insure, did not depend upon outward circumstances. Our endeavors should be in instructing the children, to open the door of their minds, which by unfortunate circumstances has been closed. Let us rouse their attention, and make them acquainted with themselves by every means. If this once is effected, they will not be slow to learn the treasures they possess. And in this way, will they become religious. The religious thought that is thus awakened, becomes a part of the character, and enjoyment of life. We are apt to think that religion is to be

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administered to the poor as medicine to the sick; on the contrary, it should be a part of their daily food, their wholesome nourishment, which they are to enjoy and be happy in; and while instructing the children we are only to let them know that they have minds, and they will soon feel that this cannot satisfy them without the thoughts of Him who gave them. To children who have no examples of virtue to follow, who see no service rendered to God, it is particularly important that they should carry within their own breasts a knowledge of these sources of happiness, which are the pledges of God's never ending love. All have had experience of the power of the spirit of God to sustain the poor, the neglected, and the suffering; few of us but have witnessed the silent endurance of trials by those who have become acquainted with the heavenly image, they bear in their breasts which is continually communicating to them a love that shall never fail, and giving them a happiness passing show. This fountain of felicity is opened to all. "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," are the words of the Son of God.

We have seen this pure and elevated piety in individuals, whose lives have presented one unvaried scene of trial and disappointment, for whom the sun of happiness has never risen in this world, but whose countenances show us that the heavenly ray is in their hearts, and that they patiently wait for the lifting of the veil which is to introduce them to the scenes of another world, where they will enjoy more fully the divine love that has sustained them in this. Happy for all such, that circumstances or education has revealed to them that the source of happiness was in the mind which their Creator has blessed

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them with. Let us then not relax in our exertions to keep to the knowledge of this blessed truth; and may the reward of such exertions be a better knowledge of these things.

HINTS TO SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS.

The fear that some who take classes, are not sufficiently impressed with the importance of the instruction they are called upon to give, and of the impressions to be made upon the minds of the children thus entrusted to their care, has induced me to say a few words on this important subject. It is different from any other instruction given at schools, both in its importance and bearing upon the future lives of these children; and to have it felt by the children, it must be felt by the teacher and brought to the child with earnestness. All are in some degree dependent on manner, and children feel it quite as much as the matured mind. I should be far from wishing this instruction to be given in a formal, solemn, studied manner, but this differs widely from a light or thoughtless manner of addressing them. I would have cheerfulness carried to the school as to the house of worship, but not gaiety; and I have felt some fear that if the heart of many teachers were sufficiently impressed with the great truths of which they speak (and it is not for us to judge the heart) they did not go with that calm, quiet manner which carries with it to the child a conviction of the value of the subject to our own minds. This is an argument against very young teachers, and I feel that there are objections to those whose minds are hardly made clear upon the subject of religion. They cannot be expected to give clear views to others. I know that mere years are of no avail;

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for many live to be very old without serious or right thoughts, but the young have hardly had time to acquire the knowledge requisite to arrange their thoughts with sufficient clearness to teach others who are hardly less experienced than themselves. We must be in earnest and feel the full importance of all we say, or it will be a cold work, little felt and of slight continuance. All teachers ought to be careful not to use the school room as a place for meeting and talking of other concerns foreign to the subject of the school, or in a light manner upon that subject. Many things right in themselves may do harm here, by giving a greater liberty both to children and young teachers; for in almost all schools there are some so young as to look up to the older ones for an example. How careful then ought we to be that our example is good, that we do not injure a cause that we mean to help. We must be in earnest, for it is God's work in which we are engaged; we must be diligent, for our time is short; we must be serious, for the happiness of Heaven may be increased by our exertions, if rightly performed.

A.

INTELLIGENCE.

Annual Fasting and Prayer for Colleges.—The last Thursday in February was observed as a day of humiliation and prayer, among many, perhaps all, Orthodox Churches, with special reference to the colleges. We are informed that this is a stated observance, designed to be perpetual. In the Quarterly Journal of the Education Society, we find the following estimates. "The number of young men, now enjoying the advantages of a public classical

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education in these United States, is estimated at *three thousand.* About *one third* of the young men in the New England Colleges are professors of religion. Our information from the middle, southern and western colleges is much less particular; but we fear that not more than six or seven hundred of the whole three thousand included in our present estimate, are now on the Lord's side. More than *three* to *one* probably are still his *enemies.* Probably more than a *thousand* who will soon enter the higher seminaries are now pursuing their studies in academies. Supposing *one* fourth to be now pious, *which is a large estimate,* between *seven and eight hundred* are aliens, without hope and without God in the world. Five hundred *who are now unreconciled* to God, will become members of our public seminaries the present year; and how great is the hostile influence which they will carry along with them." With what feelings can we regard this presumptuous spiritual arithmetic, this *guaging* of the public morals? We know there is much honesty and seriousness in the motive. God forbid we should judge those harshly who calculate these desolations in Zion but to pray and weep over their amount. But in the name of reason and conscience, what *power* has this arithmetician to make a statistical matter of private personal religion? It is here soberly set down against hundreds of our young scholars, that they are enemies to God. What next? Shall we not one day have the names of reprobates entered in the same bill, and our students classified, according to the judgment passed abroad upon their piety, when they enter our colleges? There is something in this which our intelligent community should frown upon.

Charity Students.—Of those who have belonged to the Theological Seminaries of Andover, Princeton, and Auburn, and who have become ministers or missionaries, it is stated in the Quarterly Journal of the American Education Society, that the largest proportion have belonged to the class of indigent or charity students. Fifty-seven beneficiaries have been taken under the patronage of the Education Society since the 1st July last.

The Presbytery of Hanover.—This presbytery embraces the Synods of North and South Carolina, and has under its care the Union Theological Seminary. The two following Resolutions were lately passed by that body.

I. Resolved, That at every meeting of Presbytery the Professors

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belonging to the institution be required to make a particular Report respecting the religious state of the students.

III. That on every occasion when students are called upon to perform exercises for trials, there be also *an Examination of them as to their progress in vital piety;* which examination shall be held in private, by a Standing Committee appointed for that purpose.

Are we then to have a Confessional in our public schools? And shall Protestants place over their consciences a Standing Committee? What use can there be in this inquisitorial practice! The hypocrite may still deceive, and the good man will yet be known only by his conduct.

Religious Denominations in the United States.—1. The Presbyterian Church comprises, 16 Synods, 90 Presbyteries, 1214 Ministers, 1880 Churches, 136,479 Communicants.

2. The Orthodox Congregational Churches in New England contain, 62 Associations, 720 Ministers, 960 Churches.

3. The Episcopal Church has 11 Dioceses, 11 Bishops, 486 Clergymen, 598 Churches.

4. The Methodist Episcopal Church has 17 Conferences, 1465 Preachers, 2,500 Societies, 381,997 Members.

5. The Calvinistic Associated Baptists have 190 Associations, 3723 Churches, 2577 Ministers.—*See Quarterly Journal of Education Society.*

We wish some one would furnish us with materials for a general estimate of the number of Unitarian Churches. In the statements of the Journal above quoted, respecting Ordinations, &c. Unitarians and Congregationalists are kept distinct. But it is well known that the Unitarian Churches are, with scarce an exception, Congregational. To what is the mistake in the Journal owing?

Missions.—The amount of donations received by the Board for Foreign Missions from January 21st to February 20th last, was $8,982,75.

Hungarian Popular Songs.—A volume bearing this title, with critical and historical notices of the manners, literature, and language as spoken in Hungary and Transylvania, is speedily to be published by John Bowring, author of "Matins and Vespers," &c. "It is said Mr Bowring is now a sufferer by heavy commercial losses, which renders him dependent on public patronage for the furtherance of his literary enterprises. We earnestly hope he may not find this reliance vain."

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THE

UNITARIAN ADVOCATE.

VOL. I. MAY, 1828. No. V.

LETTER TO A TRINITARIAN FRIEND.

MY RESPECTED FRIEND,—In the course of conversation last evening, when you undertook the defence of the Trinity, I was forcibly impressed, with the power of mystery, to charm the finest understandings. You appeared to be attached to the doctrine, not so much because you were struck with the strength of argument in its favor, from revelation or from reason, as because your imagination was fascinated by its very indefiniteness and obscurity. In your mind, the same grandeur was associated with the mystery of the Trinity, which belongs to the mysteries of our own being, of the operations of Providence, of the system of nature. But, I confess, that to me, the Trinity recalls no such emotions. Instead of classing it with those sublime subjects of thought, which are suggested by our condition in this world, and our hopes of a future, I should place it among those fictitious creations of a strange fancy, of which the dark ages were fertile.

I have always thought,—and I was confirmed in the opinion by your conversation,—that the doctrine of the Trinity bore a striking analogy to the doctrine of Tran-

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substantiation. You will not be offended, I am sure, with my freedom, if I proceed to point out to your notice, some particulars, in which, it appears to me, the two doctrines are very similar.

1. The *statement* of each involves an apparent contradiction. The doctrine of Transubstantiation, is that the bread and wine, employed in the ordinance of the Lord's Supper, are converted, after consecration by the priest, into the real body and blood of Jesus Christ. The elements retain the same outward appearance, but in reality are entirely changed. To the senses, they still seem to be common bread and wine; but faith regards them as the body and blood of our Lord. You acknowledge the impossibility of believing this. You confess, that no evidence could prove it to your mind. But is there not the same contradiction in the statement of the Trinity.—The contradiction is, 1. That there is but one God. 2. That the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are three separate persons, each having his own mind, consciousness and will,—each sustaining different offices in the work of redemption. 3. That the Father is God, the Son is God, the Holy Ghost is God.

Now to my mind, this statement appears to present as palpable a contradiction, as the former. I cannot torture my intellect to perceive the possibility of either of these propositions. It is as easy for me to admit that what the evidence of my senses teaches me is wine, is in reality, the blood shed on Calvary, eighteen hundred years ago, as to perceive, that the Father can be God;—the Son, God;—and the Holy Ghost, God,—and yet, that there is but one God. Both the propositions, I cannot help regarding as contradictory and impossible.

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2. The doctrine of Transubstantiation, is defended by passages of Scripture, which, if admitted in their obvious and literal sense, are certainly, indubitable proofs. Indeed, the language of our Saviour is more explicit on this point, than it is on the doctrine of the Trinity, as its warmest advocates, I presume, confess. The doctrine of Transubstantiation—unless we bring reason to our aid, in interpreting Scripture—is supported by direct quotations from the New Testament. "Except ye eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of man, ye have no life in you." "And he took the bread and said, this is my body, which is given for you." In like manner, "he took the cup and said, this is my blood." By these texts, the believers in Transubstantiation, think they demonstrate their doctrine. But the man, who permits his common sense to operate, refutes them on the principles of criticism and sound reason, and shews that the language of Scripture is not to be pressed in its most obvious sense, too closely, but that we must look beyond the letter to the spirit.

The analogy which the Trinity bears to this point, is that it is supported by some obvious passages of Scripture. You say, that you are convinced of the truth of the doctrine, by certain texts in which a triple distinction of the divine nature is implied; or by passages which appear to invest Jesus Christ with the attributes of the Deity. But are these passages as numerous or as forcible, as those which the Catholic alleges in favor of Transubstantiation? Why do you not receive *them*, in their literal sense? Plainly, because you exercise your reason and cannot admit an impossibility.

On the same grounds, I interpret the texts, apparently

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in favor of the Trinity, according to my reason. If your argument is just against the Catholic, mine is just against you. To maintain consistency, you must become a Catholic or a Unitarian. If you adopt an opinion, from the literal import of Scripture, without regard to the real import, you must believe in Transubstantiation; but if you refuse to believe a contradiction, though capable of a plausible support from Scripture, you must renounce the Trinity. The Catholic can retort upon you, with precisely the same arguments, with which you attack the Unitarian; why, then, will you not allow the latter the same advantage which you assume, in contending with the former?

3. The two doctrines agree in the mode of argument, by which they are supported. A Protestant, reasoning with a believer in Transubstantiation, would argue something in this way. "I cannot believe as you assert, that the bread and wine of the eucharist, are the real body and blood of our Lord, for the supposition contradicts the evidence of my senses. The bread, which is before me, to all appearance, is unchanged. It has all the properties, which belonged to it before. I perceive, its form, color, taste, smell; and I am sure, that these are the qualities of real bread."

But to this the Catholic replies; "I admit all that you have asserted. If you think you have made out any argument, you mistake the ground of dispute. You have proved nothing by proving that the element in question, has the visible properties of bread; that is granted: but the ground we take is this: that, allowing all you have said, the bread is still in a mysterious manner, the true body of Christ; its retaining the appearance of bread, is

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nothing against the conclusion; for our Saviour expressly said, "this is my body." Now we must admit this to support the consistency of scripture. And after all, the whole subject is a solemn mystery, which is not to be investigated too closely by our carnal reason."

How similar the mode of reasoning adopted by the Trinitarian. We say, "that we do not believe the doctrine of the Trinity, because it is inconsistent with the divine Unity. We are convinced by the united testimony of Nature and Revelation, that the Lord our God, is ONE LORD. Now, we cannot think at the same time, that he is THREE. Again, we find our Saviour continually spoken of in the New Testament, as the Son of God,—distinct from the Father—and inferior to him; we cannot then believe that he is God, equal with the Father."

To this you reply, "What you say is true. No one doubts it. To press this point so closely, betrays ignorance of the controversy. Trinitarians hold to the Unity of God, and to the inferiority of the Son to the Father; but at the same time, they believe in the Trinity and the equality of the son with the Father. You gain nothing by proving that the knowledge of Jesus Christ is limited; we admit that; but believe too, that his knowledge is unlimited; you gain nothing by proving that his power was given him by the Father; we admit that; but believe too, that his power is underived and independent: you gain nothing, by proving that he is the Son of God, and finite; we admit that, but believe too, that he is God, and infinite. To be sure it is a mystery; but we must submit our carnal reason to the teachings of scripture."

Now, how this differs from the reasoning of the Roman Catholic, in favor of transubstantiation, I am unable to

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perceive. But, that reasoning you pronounce sophistical, contradictory, and absurd. You acknowledge, that it tends to disturb the foundations of our knowledge and to weaken our confidence in all human opinions. Why then, will you persist yourself in an argument, which in another application, you see is palpably erroneous. I am sure, that your fair mind must confess the inconsistency, that I have pointed out, and be slow in condemning your brother, for being unable to believe that the same being can know all things and yet know but in part; has received all his power from another, and yet possesses it independently; is finite and inferior to God, and infinite and equal to God; while your good sense and knowledge of scriptural interpretation prevents you from agreeing with the Catholic, that Christ intended to be literally understood, when he said this is my body and this is my blood, and the capacity of your mind disables you from believing that the substance, which you see before you, with all the properties of bread, is actually the flesh of the Son of God.

4. The two doctrines agree, in the support which they have received, from men of eminent learning and piety. You say, that the doctrine of the Trinity has been the undisputed doctrine of the church for ages; that thousands have been nurtured, under the influence of its belief in the principles of a deep and fervent piety; that volumes filled with erudition and argument have been written in its defence; and that the spirits of the just have clung to it in the hour of death, with a strong perception of its truth, and confidence in its power. You point me to the philosophic Leibnitz, the profound Boyle, the devout Doddridge, as witnesses to the truth of the Trinity, and by their testimony you are confirmed in your own belief.

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But your argument goes too far. For, if it is good, it proves the mystery of transubstantiation. If the authority of great names has power to prove that the idea of a Trinity is not inconsistent with the divine Unity, it can prove, also, that the bread of the eucharist is the body of the Lord, without doing violence to human reason. The same considerations, which apply to your doctrine, apply with equal force, to the doctrine of the Roman Catholic. That has found advocates and believers among men of distinguished talent and learning. That has been the orthodox doctrine for ages. That has shed a light over the dying bed. That can number among its adherents, such names as Fenelon, Bossuet and Pascal, whose example might sanction any doctrine, which is capable of support by human authority. But what does it prove? Nothing. They were men, fallible men; and on this point, you acknowledge their mistake.—We regard in like manner the names which you adduce. We yield them the claim of intellect and piety, but believe they were in error: of course, their authority has no weight with us. For if we were influenced by the associations, which are suggested by the example of the great and good, in the history of the church, we must not only believe the doctrine of the Trinity, but the mystery of transubstantiation.

5. Both agree, in having been deemed essential to salvation. One of the greatest supports, which the doctrine of the Trinity has received, is the idea, that it is a fundamental point of Christianity. This gives you an advantage, in your arguments, with the great majority of inquirers, such as the Roman Catholic church well know how to use. You tell a man, that the doctrine of the Trinity is true, and that unless he believes it, he hazards the inte-

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rests of his soul. We tell a man, that the same doctrine is false; but we dare not add that its reception would endanger his salvation. Though by this course, we think we gain in consistency, we are sure we lose in power; though we adhere to scripture, we lose sight of policy. If we could so far violate our convictions, as to declare that the future happiness of an individual is endangered by his reception of any speculative doctrine, we might present an appalling picture of the evil of believing the Trinity. We should then have an influence with the timid, the melancholy, the desponding, which you possess, but which we do not covet. We could appeal to the fears, with the strength, with which we would address the understanding. While then I concede to you the advantage for proselytism, which you enjoy, in making a belief in the Trinity essential to salvation, I must be permitted to remind you, that it is an advantage, which you enjoy in common with the Roman Catholic, who makes a belief in transubstantiation, essential to salvation. He regards you with the same pity, for not being able to agree with him, which you manifest for the Unitarian, for not being able to agree with you. You lament over our blindness, in rejecting the Trinity; he laments with equal compassion over yours, in rejecting transubstantiation. You warn me of the danger of attending a Unitarian church; he will warn you of the danger of attending a Protestant church: if, then, I give in to your idea, that I must return to the pale of Trinitarianism, for safety and religious comfort, I must be consistent and follow my Catholic brother into the bosom of the Holy Mother of the church; for not a single argument can you bring to prove the necessity of a belief in the Trinity, which

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he cannot urge, with equal—I had almost said with tenfold force, to prove the necessity of a belief in transubstantiation.

6. The two doctrines correspond in their origin. Neither of them, it is acknowledged, is contained in the recorded discourses of the Apostles. Neither is found in the confessions of faith, required of the primitive converts. Neither is recognized in the earliest controversies, which agitated the church. No traces of the Trinity or of Transubstantiation are found in ecclesiastical history, until after the apostolic age. But after Christianity began to be corrupted by the speculations of philosophers, both the doctrines were developed and became the subjects of eager contention. You need not that I should inform you, that the doctrine of Transubstantiation received its present form, at the fourth council of the Lateran, in the year 1215, according to the decree of Pope Innocent the Third, who embodied in definite language, the floating opinions, that had risen like a mist, on the purity of the church. But you seem to have forgotten, that the Trinity,—though it dates from an earlier period—is proved by faithful history, to have sprung up subsequently to the times of the apostles. On this point, you will give credit to a writer of your own sect,—the popular Mosheim—who was too candid, at least in this instance, to sacrifice historical accuracy to theological prejudice. In his account of the fourth century, having spoken of a certain "schismatic pestilence," which troubled the church, he says, "in the year three hundred and seventeen a *new* contention arose in Egypt upon a subject of much higher importance and with consequences of a yet *more pernicious* nature. The subject of

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this fatal controversy, which kindled such deplorable divisions, in the christian world, was the doctrine of *three persons in the Godhead;* a doctrine, which in the three preceding centuries, had happily escaped the vain curiosity of human researches, and been left undefined and undetermined by any particular set of ideas."

"The Emperor Constantine, looking upon the subject of this controversy as *a matter of small importance, and as little connected with the fundamental and essential doctrines of religion*, contented himself at first, with addressing a letter to the contending parties, in which he admonished them, to put an end to their disputes. But when the prince saw that his admonitions were without effect, and that the troubles and commotions which the passions of men too often mingle with religious disputes, were spreading and increasing daily, throughout the empire, he assembled at length, in the year 325, the famous council of Nice in Bithynia, wherein the deputies of the church universal were summoned to put an end to the controversy."

"And in the year 381, an hundred and fifty bishops, at the council of Constantinople, gave the finishing touch to what the council of Nice had left imperfect, and fixed in a full and determinate manner, the doctrine of *three* Persons *in one* God, which is as yet received among the generality of Christians."

From this time, the Trinity obtained a strong place, among the doctrines of orthodoxy, and though Calvin expressed his disapprobation of the word as barbarous and savoring of heathenism, and Melancthon bewailed the bloody tragedies that it would cause to be enacted, the Reformation did not destroy its roots, and it is still a

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prevalent and essential doctrine in all the great churches of Christendom.

The doctrine of Transubstantiation flourished with equal vigor, through many an age of religious darkness, and though it would be too much to say, that it has gone to the tomb of once powerful errors, its springs of life are touched, and it cannot long survive. In this, also, it is my belief that the doctrine of the Trinity corresponds with it.

I will relieve your patience and close this long letter, by touching for a moment, on this point. The progress of light and knowledge has been fatal to the belief of Transubstantiation: it will be equally fatal to a belief in the Trinity. I am convinced of this, by the qualifications and explanations, to which its advocates are now accustomed to resort. It is not trusted, in its original mystery, but is softened and adorned, by the additions of ingenious theologians. But it cannot stand the rude shock of an inquiring age. Reason will refuse to lend its testimony to support a contradiction. Charity will rejoice at the banishment of an error, which has embittered the hearts,—and shed the blood of the saints. As the knowledge of the Scriptures increases, the arguments for the Trinity will diminish. Already, many passages once considered indubitable proofs, are given up, by its enlightened advocates. Already, many texts apparently strong in favor of the Trinity, have been found to labor under such extreme suspicion, as to render them useless in theological controversy. The history of the past, the character of man, the tendencies of society, are to my mind convincing proofs, that the mystery of the Trinity will be rejected from our system of belief, and that the hour cometh, yea, is now

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come, when the true worshippers shall worship the FATHER in spirit and in truth. That you may be one of the increasing number, who acknowledge the Father, as the only true God, and Jesus Christ, as his Messenger and Son, is the sincere prayer of

Your attached friend, —— ——

ON THE OBSTACLES TO A PERFECT UNIFORMITY OF SENTIMENT.

IN those melancholy moments in which the mind turns away sickened and disgusted from the contemplation of violence, fraud, injustice, cruelty, and all the thousand forms of sin and wo, which the world presents, it is a thought full of consolation, that all this evil is limited within bounds, which it cannot pass; that its triumph is temporary; that there is an unseen hand which checks and overrules it, and causes it to minister to the purposes of perfect benevolence. Some of the modes in which evil is made to subserve the cause of goodness are within our comprehension, and to inquire for them may be not less a duty than a relief. But there is one evil which at the first glance we might be tempted to think altogether without any mixture of good, I mean the evil which arises from the dissensions of christians themselves on the subjects of their belief. That there should be any bitterness of contention on such a subject as religion, where we can all have but one interest, and that an eternal one; but still more, that any bad passions should intrude on our discussions, on such a religion as Christianity, whose origin is the love of God, whose end is peace and good will towards men,

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whose laws, whose gifts, whose motives, whose all is love; whose founder is the Prince of Peace, and all whose spirit, like its author, is peace; peace to him that is nigh, and peace to him that is a far off; that all the wealth, and variety, and magnificence of the gospel system should shrink into a meagre list of questionable points of doubtful disputation, and that our blessed Master should be so cruelly wounded in the house of his friends, does indeed seem an evil, for which there *is and can be* no possible equivalent.

It is indeed impossible to deny, that it is an evil, of very great magnitude. But then it must be observed that the evil does not arise from the mere circumstance of difference of sentiment, but wholly from the bad passions we suffer our disputes to call forth; and if these passions were excluded, there are reasons which may be offered to show that our differences would not only cease to be an evil, but become a positive and decided good. I shall at this time endeavor to show what are the causes of these dissensions, or in other words, what are the obstacles to a perfect uniformity of sentiment. *From the constitution of the human mind; from the imperfection of language; and from the nature of the subjects of revelation*, it seems impossible that this diversity of sentiment should be wholly avoided without essentially changing the moral nature and condition of man.

In the first place then, *from the constitution of the human mind*, it seems impossible that this diversity of sentiment should be wholly avoided, without essentially changing the moral nature and condition of man. There is nothing in nature so remarkable as its variety, and nowhere among things of the same species is this va-

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riety more remarkable than in the different construction of the minds of different men. How much of this variety is original, and how much the result of the difference of education, of the difference of station and condition in life, and different opportunities of acquiring knowledge, it is of little importance to inquire. The fact admits of no question, that the minds of all men are in different stages of that progressive and everlasting improvement for which the Deity has formed them. The mind of every man living is in fact modified so differently from the mind of every other man, that each sees all things from a different point of view, and receives impressions from them peculiar to itself. It is probable therefore that no moral proposition,—when it is at all complex,—will appear exactly the same to every thinking mind. The shades of difference may not always be very important or very strongly marked, but they are always visible even among the most sincere and unbiassed inquirers for truth. However great, then, may be our agreement in words, to any speculative truths, it is not too much to say that no two men can hold them under exactly the same form.

This must be the case in a greater or less degree, in every subject of investigation, but it is peculiarly so in the speculative doctrines of religion, where, from the deeply momentous nature of the subject, many differences which on other subjects might be neglected, justly rise into importance. From their very nature many of them can never be submitted to the test of experience, and most of them relate to subjects so sublime and mysterious, and involve so many questions of the most refined and abstracted metaphysics, that the human understanding can

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never fully comprehend them. Though every doctrine which relates to the practical duties of man, and every view, which most affects the heart, is so simple and clear, that he who runs may read, yet, to him, who remembers the prodigious varieties in human understandings, original temperaments, points, interests, infirmities, degrees of light, and degrees of capacity, it will appear to have been impossible, so to have stated many of those speculative topics about which the controversies of Christians are occupied, as that they should not have been received diversely by different minds.

To those, who have observed the differences among Christians, it must always appear to be the case, that when truly honest men dispute, their disputes turn entirely on the *meaning of words.* One of the reasons why these differences are so great with regard to the Holy Scriptures is, that the language in which they are written is so wholly peculiar. It has long since ceased to be spoken. It abounds in idioms altogether unlike our own, and admits a boldness of phraseology, to which, though perfectly intelligible to the people of the East, we have nothing similar. It is full of allusions to events, which from the lapse of time have now become obscure; to customs and modes of thinking among the Jews, which are strange to us; and to the peculiar circumstances of the early Christians, of which we can hardly have an adequate conception.

Now to understand the import of writings such as these; to take from every expression the very idea, and nothing more, which it conveyed to the persons to whom it was originally addressed; and after all, to determine in what sense and to what extent these ideas are applicable to our circumstances, is a task which must be very unequally performed by minds which are endowed so dif-

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ferently. Nor indeed if the language of the scriptures were like our own, would it be possible altogether to avoid diversity of interpretation. There is no one, who has not a thousand times witnessed how difficult it is even in a language and on subjects, with which we have been familiar from our infancy, to guard against the possibility of being misunderstood. Let any man for example, pass a few hours in a court of justice, and observe how different are the statements of perfectly honest witnesses, and what different degrees of force and meaning the same expressions will convey to different minds, and he will have a lesson taught him of the necessary ambiguity of language, which will make him wonder, not that the Scriptures have been often misunderstood, but that they are so well apprehended on all those subjects which are essential to our duty.

Another cause of the disagreement arises from *the very nature of the subjects of revelation.* There is and can be no serious disagreement about the practical precepts of the gospel, nor respecting the great ends of the mission of our Saviour. The difference has been about the motives and means, and not about the precepts and ends of the Gospel, that is to say, not so much, what kind of characters we should possess in order to become objects of the favor of God, but what are those views which tend most to form such a character. Now we are to recollect, that revelation is to have its completion in another world, and we might expect to find expressions relating to it, which by their nature, must appear to us, under some degree of obscurity. There must be many things referring to the nature of God, the reasons of his government, the extent of his purposes,—the nature of Christ and of the spiritual kingdom, of which he is exalted to be Prince,—

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and to the future expectations of man in a state of existence so unlike the present, concerning which we can only know in part, and prophecy but in part. It is probable, that till our minds receive that exaltation and enlargement which we look for in another world, these ideas could not have been made more intelligible. But the difficulty is, that the mind of inquisitive man, is not contented with the measure of knowledge which God has seen fit to reveal. He would be wise above what is clearly written. He feels a restless and unappeasable curiosity urging him beyond the limits which God has set to human knowledge. It is not wonderful, therefore, that when he reasons on subjects, which by their nature are placed above his comprehension, he should fall into many contradictory speculations and raise many weak and baseless theories. Whenever he deserts the solid ground of clear and indisputable revelation, he abandons himself without chart or compass on the ocean of uncertainty, and becomes the sport of every wind which passes over its surface.

It appears then, from the difference of the constitution of men's minds; from the unavoidable imperfection of language, and from the nature of the subjects of revelation, that a considerable diversity of sentiment on the speculative topics of religion, is wholly unavoidable. The impossibility of excluding all doubts on subjects like these, has been most remarkably illustrated by the want of success of those who have endeavored, (does it not seem rashly and presumptuously ?) to form articles of faith more explicit than the sacred scriptures. It is a fact which the whole history of the church attests, that there has never been a statement of the arti-

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cles of belief, drawn up so closely and unambiguously, as not to have the meaning of many passages of it rendered doubtful in less than a half century, even to those who were sincerely desirous of embracing it; so difficult is it to improve what our blessed Master and his apostles have done. All these obstacles to a perfect uniformity of sentiment, it is to be observed, would exist, though all men were governed by the unbiassed desire of embracing the truth in its simplicity.

In the enumeration of the hindrances to a perfect uniformity of sentiment, we must not overlook one so powerful as that which arises from the *infirmity of human nature.* When we consider how much every man is exposed to be wrongly biassed by prejudice, by education, and a thousand accidental circumstances; when we remember that Christianity in this world seldom or never succeeds in completely regulating those passions, which we all inherit with our nature, and that even the best man has to struggle with many remains of infirmity; when we remember also, that because a man assumes the name and wears the appearance of a Christian, he does not necessarily possess his spirit, we shall discern grounds enough for even greater discordance of sentiment, than is found among Christians. The influence of causes like these cannot be controlled, while human nature remains what it is.

But perhaps, in opposition to the conclusion at which we aim, it may be asserted, that "truth is one," that there can therefore be but one way of thinking among real Christians,—and of course there can be but *one* among the innumerable sects of Christians, who deserve the name which they assume. There is a sense in

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which this maxim is quite true, and another in which it is quite false. When it is applied to the acts of the intellect merely, and is understood to teach us that no one can be practically right, who is not speculatively right, there is hardly any thing more fallacious, more plainly contradicted by the evidence of fact, or of a more mischievous tendency, destroying the mutual benevolence of Christians, and filling them with spiritual pride. If it were true, in this sense, then it must follow that every degree of error fatally depraves the heart; and if so, what man on earth could be saved? For what man can say, in a world where the wisest see through a glass darkly and know but in part, and prophesy but in part, that *he* is wholly exempt from error, and that truth appears to him, as it does to the mind of God alone, pure from all alloy? But if the maxim does not prove that every degree of error fatally depraves the heart, it proves nothing for the purpose for which it is adduced; for if it be admitted that a holy heart is consistent with some degree of error, it is for God only, not for weak and feeble man, to determine, whether it may not be consistent with such a degree as we believe to exist among the various sects of sincere Christians, mingled, as it is, with so much important truth; and thus the point for which the maxim is quoted must be abandoned. If, however, this maxim is taken in the abstract, we allow that 'truth is one.' The nature of things themselves, must not be confounded with the nature of our opinions about what they are. A being or quality is, by itself, apart from our conceptions, undoubtedly *one* and not *diverse*. But as it is thought of by us, that being or quality, will conform more or less to its true nature, according to the medium through which

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it has been apprehended, and the power of our minds to discern aright. Happily for us it is not necessary to know perfectly, in order to act well; we may have such views of truth, as will save us from sin, though they be mingled with error as we now hold them, and must be greatly changed when the unsullied lights of a higher state shall beam upon the soul. W. S. T.

REMARKS ON ISAIAH LXIV, 6.

The perverse application of Scripture language has always been one of the most fruitful sources of erroneous views of religious doctrines and duties. Passages are taken and used in a general sense, which were intended only as limited or local expressions; or they are broken off from their original connexion, and are thus made to bear upon points that never entered into the thoughts of the writer. And as few will take pains enough to detect these mistakes, the consequence is, that by the great mass of the christian world, the Scriptures are familiarly quoted to give support to notions, at which reason and common sense stand amazed and confounded.

Among the passages, which have been thus abused, is the declaration in Isaiah lxiv. 6. When the prophet says,—"all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags,"—or, as it is better translated,—"all our deeds of righteousness are as a rejected garment," he has been supposed to teach that the really good deeds, which mankind perform, are wholly worthless, utterly destitute of any value or efficacy as to our salvation. It would surely be strange, if such a proposition were sanctioned by the

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voice of divine truth. For, consider what is the great object of our being placed in this world. It is precisely that we may be trained up to be good and to do good. If it be not this, I know not what it can be. Now this being the case, would it not be an unaccountable thing, if the Scriptures, from which we profess to derive the best and purest instructions, should teach us that all our righteousness is entirely useless, and good for nothing, so far as our acceptance with God is concerned? But it is our consolation to know that they teach no such thing. A few observations will make the sense of the passage in Isaiah clear, and vindicate it from any improper applications.

My first remark is, that the prophet's expression is not intended to be descriptive of goodness in general, or in the abstract, but of what was considered goodness among the Jews at that particular time. This passage, therefore, is not to be regarded as a general moral proposition, but solely as a statement of what then existed. To be convinced of this, we need only to look at the connexion. We find the prophet first breaking forth into an earnest prayer for the interference and manifestation of God's power and mercy; in a fine burst of eloquence, he describes the Almighty as coming down, and proclaiming his majesty, to the astonishment of awe-struck man, and meeting the good with his favor. Then he turns aside to a description of the unworthiness of his countrymen, to a plaintive acknowledgment of their sinfulness, mingled with a humble hope of mercy. "We have sinned, we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags." From this it is plain, that he speaks not of the righteousness of man-

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kind at all times, but of the Jews at that particular time; and, consequently, we cannot draw from it a general proposition descriptive of the moral condition of the world in all ages. It would be manifestly unjust and improper to do so. Suppose one were to take from any ancient historian, or poet, a description of a peculiar period of immorality and depravity, and then say, this is a fair picture of the moral state of the world every where, and at all times. Would this not be considered as altogether contrary to every principle of just reasoning? And certainly, it would be no less so, to make the same use of the prophet's local description in the passage before us.

A second, and still more important remark is, that when the prophet in this passage, uses the word *righteousness*, he does not mean by it righteousness in its true and good sense. He uses it in such a sense, as to imply a reproach or sarcasm upon what the Jews then prided themselves in, as deeds of righteousness. Their standard of moral excellence, we must remember, was then exceedingly low; for they thought it to consist merely in an observance of the forms and ceremonies prescribed in the ritual law; and if these were statedly attended to, they deemed themselves at liberty to be as dishonest, oppressive, and unjust, as they pleased. This was their righteousness,—wholly an outside, hypocritical thing, having no vitality, no moral power; and of such righteousness the prophet might well declare, as he did, that it was worthless as filthy rags, or as a rejected garment. But this is a very different thing from saying that real virtue, or true moral excellence, is worthless; in fact, nothing was further from the prophet's thoughts, for he

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says not a word as to this point. His declaration, therefore, is not to be applied to sincere virtue, springing from good motives, but to these empty services, these unsubstantial formalities of miscalled righteousness, which are only a cover for corrupt principles, and corrupt deeds.—Suppose the case of a man, who is very precise in attending upon the outward forms of religion, and yet is knavish, intemperate, or profane: would you not say, that all the pretended attention to religious forms, on which he valued himself, and which he thought to be righteousness was of no worth, nothing better than filthy rags? Just so the prophet speaks of the same thing among the Jews; and it is a strange perversion to understand his words in any other sense.

These explanations set this passage in a clear light, and vindicate it from all pernicious misconstructions.—It is spoken of the Jews at that time, locally and particularly, not of man generally; and even with regard to them, it is spoken not of real moral excellence, or true righteousness, but of that outside, worthless pretence to goodness, which leaves the heart and the life as bad as ever.

Let us then beware of any system, which would create a disposition to depreciate or undervalue good and sound morality. We have seen that what the prophet says furnishes no ground for such a notion. And yet in some books, and in some systems of divinity, this passage is quoted as a proof, that moral virtues, or good works, have no efficacy towards our salvation. It is a main and favorite point with many, to decry everything that man himself can do for the attainment of future happiness, and to represent that the best and purest person that

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ever lived, is no more entitled to the reward of heaven on account of his goodness and purity, than the worst and most abandoned of mankind. Nay, some have even gone so far as to say, that good works are a hinderance to salvation, inasmuch as they obstruct the triumph of mere and unconditional grace. Now I do not, by any means, suppose that there are any Christians, who would for a moment recommend immorality, or who would not even inculcate, and enforce good, sound morals. We have reason to thank God, that there is a redeeming spirit in the good sense and in the common principles of our nature, which, in spite of the errors of their system, will not suffer men to encourage or to sanction immorality. But the danger is, that by constantly ringing it in the ears of your fellowmen, that good works are worth nothing for the purposes of salvation, you may bring them practically to believe they are worth nothing for any purpose. These extravagant and highly colored representations are made in order to humble man, and to magnify divine grace. But may we not feel as deeply, as can be required, our dependence on God for salvation, without casting a stigma on morality. It is certainly true, that we are saved by grace, that is, by favor, inasmuch as it is the grace or favor of God alone, which has given us all the means of becoming fit for future happiness, with the blessed promise of his spiritual assistance: but it is the same God, who requires the diligent use of these means, and has made our improvement to depend upon and correspond to the use of means, assuring us that precisely in proportion to our improvement shall be our reward. Hence we see not only the importance, but the absolute necessity of moral virtue to our

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everlasting welfare, at the same time that we rely on the goodness of God for it. The great mistake is, that men consider salvation as a thing of arbitrary appointment, having no connexion with what is done in this life, but connected only with the purpose of God and the sufferings of Christ,—making man only a subject to be acted upon, and to be acted for, but having nothing to do, and being able to do nothing for himself. But salvation, or future happiness which is the same thing, has relation to man as a moral agent, and is the result of the use of his moral agency,—so that just in proportion as he is good, he will be happy, and no further.—Moral goodness, therefore, has an intimate and essential connexion with salvation; and because we say this, to accuse us of depending on our own merits for salvation, is most unjust and injurious. You might just as well say, that we depended on our own merits for the harvest, after we have ploughed the ground, cultivated the soil, and used industriously the means which God has put into our hands. The one is just as much the direct and proper result of causes established by God, as the other. Let us be careful, then, that we do not cherish, or teach any views, which would lead ourselves or others to think meanly of the value of morality. Let us not fix upon it terms of reproach, and by misapplying Scripture expressions call it "the carnal works of the law," or, "filthy rags." Good works mean a life of goodness, proceeding from a good heart; and they are not only not to be cast by with a sneer, but are essential to our acceptance with God. Christian morality goes to the heart, requires purity of thought and purpose, and sends us forth to do and to submit to the will of God; and if a

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man thinks that all this is no better than filthy rags, he must have a strange notion of religion.

But at the same time, that we are admonished by the passage before us not to think lightly of the value of sound morality, we are likewise taught the utter worthlessness of that hypocritical, external, or wholly inadequate righteousness, which is bottomed upon no good principles, and cherished by no pure motives. Men are very apt to set their standards exceedingly low: and oftentimes what they call their good works, or their righteousness, may fitly be compared, in the prophet's language, to "a rejected garment." Thus, in religion, we are prone to rest in outward observances as the end, instead of using them as the means. It has been a great mistake in all ages to place an undue value upon external services Anything has been supposed to be religion, except purity of heart and life. Every device for obtaining the favor of God has been tried, except that of being good. Altars have been erected and victims offered; stately temples have been reared, and clouds of incense have rolled their perfume,—and men have imagined that with such things God was well pleased, without anything further. And even under the Christian religion, simple as it is in its outward form, we are by no means free from danger on this subject. We are apt to think that we are better for observances, even when our hearts and lives are no better for them. But such righteousness is worth no more than "a rejected garment." If we imagine that going to meeting on the Sabbath, or at other times, and belonging to the church, without anything else, make up the whole of religion, we fall into the same error as did Isaiah's countrymen of old, and deserve the

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same rebuke; for surely the same description will apply with equal force to our case.—And in morals too, a like dangerous mistake is too often made. Many think it enough barely to abstain from open vice, and if they do but keep out of the reach of legal punishment, feel quite easy, and perhaps take to themselves much credit. They would deem it a very foolish scrupulousness not to avail themselves of all those modifications of fraud and selfishness, which are decent and common, and would probably be quite surprised if you were to tell them, in the language of the prophet, that "all their righteousness is as a rejected garment." Yet surely such it is, and nothing better. Others contrive to do a little more, than barely to avoid what the law of the land forbids, and yet are contented with a very superficial morality. They are honest, and industrious, and keep on terms of good neighborhood with their fellow men, and thus rest easy as if they had attained the christian character, because no one can say that he has been wronged or injured by them. Now all this is very well, as far as it goes; but then it is very cheap and imperfect morality, and when placed by the side of what Christianity requires, its deficiency will be sufficiently glaring.

Christian morality goes much higher and deeper than this. It considers man as a being made for eternity, and therefore it inculcates upon him not a few shifting expedients fitted merely for his abode on earth,—virtues which spring up and die on the soil of this world,—but aims to implant within him principles and habits, that will not only survive the grave, but will be the only treasure which a man can carry with him. Christian morality gives everything an elevated and holy character; it lays its foundations broad

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and deep in purity of motive and integrity of principle; it claims and exercises dominion, not only over outward actions, but over the thoughts and purposes of the heart; it makes the fruit good by making the tree good, and compels us to consider in all our moral actions, that we are made for eternity, that we are immortal and accountable beings, over whom the inspection of Omniscience continually holds its watch, and for whom a Saviour has taught, and labored, and suffered, and died. Such is the high ground, on which the morality of the gospel places us,—an eminence, far beneath which are many of those practices, which pass current for virtues in the world, and satisfy the demands of man upon man.

We may not forget, that the eye of God is upon us, and that He knows whether our righteousness be worthless "as a rejected garment," or be such as will stand the test, and be welcomed with honor at the tribunal above. It surely will be a sad thing at the close of life, to reflect that we have spent our days on those mere shadows and appearances of virtue, which leave us at last nothing but the perishable hope of the hypocrite, instead of laying up a treasure of solid, substantial righteousness in those holy principles, motives, and feelings, which shall live beyond the grave, take root in a better soil above, and flourish, and bear fruit for ever in the paradise of God. F.

[From the Winter's Wreath.]

POETRY.

"THERE are those to whom a sense of religion, has come in storm and tempest; there are those too, who have heard its still

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small voice amid rural leisure and placid contentment. But perhaps the knowledge which causeth not to err, is most frequently impressed upon the mind, during seasons of affliction; and tears are the softened showers which cause the seeds of Heaven to spring and take root in the human heart."——*The Monastery.*

To some hath God his words address'd
  Mid symbols of his ire;
And made his presence manifest
  In whirlwind, storm, and fire;
Tracing with burning lines of flame
  On trembling hearts His holy name.

By some the awful tones are heard
  In bowers where roses blow;
And where the heart's sweet thoughts are stirr
  With music's magic flow;
Young bosoms there in joy's full hour
  Have turn'd to God, and own'd his power.

To some the solemn voice has spoken
  In life's serene retreat;
Where on the still heart sounds have broken
  As from the mercy seat,
Swelling in the soft harmonies
  Which float on evening's tranquil breeze.

But chiefest where the heart is crush'd
  By sin or sorrow's power;
And each sweet voice of comfort hush'd
  Which soothed in happier hour;
Oh chiefest, to the sufferer's ear,
That still small voice is ever near.

For human tears, like spring's soft shower
  To wounded hearts are given,
To quicken with their balmy power;
  The blessed seeds of Heaven;
And flowers of bright immortal bloom
  Burst from the darkness of the tomb.

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TRINITARIAN EXPOSITION OF JOHN 17TH CHAPTER, EXAMINED.

THIS chapter is throughout a prayer. It is a prayer by Jesus Christ. There is no dispute thus far. But a prayer is a single act, in which the mind has one direction, and which engages the whole person. To suppose one and the same prayer to be part uttered by one person, and part by another person, is absurd. A change in the person praying is a change in the prayer itself; or rather it is the termination of one act of worship, and the beginning of a second and distinct prayer. The petitions recorded in John 17th, are all connected, so that they belong to, and constitute but *one* devotional exercise. This is *one* prayer by *one* person.

Matthew Henry, a celebrated orthodox commentator, whose annotations have just been republished with very high orthodox patronage, begins his exposition of this chapter by this observation: "Though Christ as God was *prayed to*, Christ as man *prays*." We are then required to believe here that this prayer was offered by Christ to himself! That he was the being who worshipped, and the being who *was* worshipped. That he prayed and was prayed to by himself.

The holy Evangelist has reported the fact otherwise. This series of petitions was addressed to *that person* whom Jesus called his Father, and who is expressly recognized here as the *only* true God, in distinction from Jesus Christ, whom he had sent, as well as from all other beings whatsoever. And shall we persist against such testimony, and against all reason and common sense, in affirming that Christ made this prayer to himself? He was not the

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Father. He is not once thus designated in the New Testament. His appellations are "the Son," "Son of God," "Son of man," "Jesus the Christ." But the person here praying addresses the object of his adoration by no name save "Father,"—"holy and righteous Father."

It is easy to see why orthodox expositors have thus wandered from the Bible. If Christ be the deity, *every* prayer must have him for its object, since prayer is made to God only. And if it were granted that the Father alone was here prayed to, then a hard question would come up, namely, how he who was himself *God the Son*, could need to *ask* of any being or person, what he must already have in his own power?—But all this will not do. The prayer was made to the Father *only*, and not to any person else, or John has recorded it incorrectly. Why Jesus, knowing as he must the existence of a Trinity, if there be such a thing, should always pray to the one God *in one person*, not even alluding to the two other persons, we cannot see. Certainly his mode of worship is very different from what is now the only approved way among those who say they alone worship God aright. They commonly address *three* persons, naming each. And if a man *never* named but one person in his religious addresses, they would esteem him a Unitarian at once. Thus did our blessed Lord on all occasions. He never prays to God under any name but one, the Father; and to *that* name exclusively, without uniting the other two, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, he attaches the titles, Lord of Heaven and of Earth, the only true God. Was not he a Unitarian in his devotions?

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But to return to the Commentary. It declares that Christ *as man* here prays. Now let us bear this in mind while we consult some passages in the recorded prayer itself. "Glorify *me* with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." The pronoun *me* shews who it was who had this glory with God before the world. It was he who prayed. But Henry says, and the orthodox say generally, Christ *as man* prayed. Hence it follows that Christ *as man*, the person praying, had the glory alluded to. But "*as man*" Christ had no existence before the world. He could only have glory with God in the sense of having it decreed to him in the divine counsel. He is said to have had it, because God then determined he should have it. Just as he is called "the Lamb *slain* from the foundation of the world." He was not actually slain then, all know.

It is argued, however, from these words of Jesus, by Trinitarians, that he was an eternal being. And yet they say and they must say, that it was not as God that he here prayed. But, we rejoin, he who prayed it was, and he only, who speaks of himself as having glory with God before the world was. If he who prayed was *a man*, that man is the person who had that glory. Unitarians consider this prayer as proceeding from the Son of God, the Christ, and not a *mere* man, not Christ in his human nature simply, but in his official relation as the Christ. Let any candid reader judge to which exposition, the record best agrees. The orthodox exposition makes the text a proof of the pre-existence of *a man*, for Christ *as man*, it says, is the person praying. But those Unitarians who believe the Messiah to have pre-existed, believe it *not* on this

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ground, but a very different, namely, on the supposition that he was a being of a higher order than human or angelic, though not God. Those who do not admit the pre-existence, refer the glory spoken of to the exalted dignity, which by *divine destination*, Jesus might, as the appointed Messiah, be very properly said to possess when God gave it to him, that is, when the plan was determined, to fulfil which, he was appointed. In that, a glorious reward was attached to a glorious work. He who did the work, might look back and say, the recompense was his when the work was assigned him. Our Lord suggests this explanation of his words. "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do, and *now*, O, Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." The word "glorify" does not mean to restore to a glory once had and afterwards relinquished, but to confer a dignity at the present moment, to invest with glory one who is *not yet* and never has been before, thus glorified. Had a mere restoration to his original condition been intended, we think a different language would have been employed.

Besides, on the Trinitarian scheme, the glory which Christ had before the world, was that of the godhead. But the glory which he here speaks of is one *given* to him. Having completed his work, he prays for the promised recompense. He even says of his disciples, "the glory which thou gavest me, I have given them." Mark the time. *Gavest* when? Christ was not *now* in possession of it, else how should he pray for it? When was that gift made to which he alludes? We answer, when God gave him the work he had just finished. What other time past

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in his life differed, in respect to his condition, from that time in which this prayer was offered? The history shews no period in which any thing glorious appears about the Son of God, except only his glorious virtues and his marvellous powers. The gift then was a *destined* one, not one already received and at that moment enjoyed.

This is confirmed further by these words: "Father! I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me, where I am, that they may behold the glory which thou hast given me, for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world." The disciples *were* then present with him. But Jesus says "where *I am*." He doubtless intends where I *shall* be. They might in a future world behold his glory, and for that he prays. But he still calls it "the glory thou *hast given* me." How future and yet past? Future, because Jesus was not yet glorified. Past, because he was appointed to glory, when the work he had just finished was assigned him, for to that work was annexed the glory of which he speaks. Observe the words "thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world." Now Jesus had already said concerning his followers, "thou hast loved them as thou hast loved me." But before the foundation of the world, the disciples could only be loved in the sense we have given, and we see not how else the language applies to our Lord.

The Trinitarian exposition makes Christ pray to himself; or strictly speaking, one part of himself to pray to the other part; one nature to intercede with the other nature. It also implies the pre-existence of *the man* Christ Jesus. Whether the Unitarian explanation be better than this, judge ye who can.

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DR BEECHER ON DEPRAVITY.

National Preacher, June 1827.

In the first of the two Sermons here referred to, the preacher observes, "It will be the object of this discourse to show that man is not religious by nature." He then proceeds to state what his proposition implies, which he says is, "that there is nothing in him, of which religion is the natural effect or consequence, without a special divine interposition." This he makes yet clearer by further declaring "we mean there is nothing in his *constitution*, of which religion is the result, without a special divine interposition, and that the first accountable character which he sustains is not a religious character."

The doctrine uniformly held by such as have argued against the native, hereditary depravity of our race, has been, that at his birth man has *no* character, is neither holy nor unholy, virtuous nor vicious, but is merely endowed with powers which make him susceptible of that moral culture and discipline out of which, *as a result*, issues character. To pretend that a being is utterly depraved in its nature, because God is not the object of the *first* affections which spring up in the heart, is absurd. For the Creator has so formed us that *instinct* is the earliest feeling and next to that, the emotions which are excited by those objects which first become known to us, as the nurse or the parent. It is *impossible* so abstract an idea as that of God, should come into the mind which has not yet become familiar with sensible things, nor can distinguish one object from another, with clearness. If there are no *innate* ideas, all must be *acquired* after the introduction of the mind to the scene of things in which it

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is designed to be trained to knowledge, virtue, and happiness. The idea of God must be acquired, no less than a notion of the various substances we handle, or qualities we approve or dislike. Until we have learned that God is, and what he is, love is out of the question. And who will say it is *possible* that this should be an *early* acquisition? who will say it is a proof of depravity, that loving the good beings whom we already know, we do not love God while we are *ignorant* of his existence and attributes?

It is certain that our *earliest* moral exercises have no relation to God primarily, but to his creatures, to whose care he entrusts us at birth, and whose kindness is understood and felt very soon afterward. That is, we love first what we know first. And this is no more an evidence that our affections are perverse at the beginning, than the fact that we learn the taste of the nourishment offered to our senses before we can distinguish the features of the parent who yields it, is a proof that our senses are perverted; or than the fact, that our senses are developed before our reason, is a mark of native irrationality.

But the principle assumed by our author goes too far to prove anything he wishes. If the circumstance he supposes, that the love of the creature precedes the love of God, and by preceding it is for a time the stronger affection necessarily, shows that there is nothing in our *constitution* of which the result is the love of God; then—the fact that the crude and false notions of childhood precede and are long paramount to more correct reason, prove that a correct understanding is not the result of anything in our constitution.

It is asking too much, to require a positively religious character at the beginning, of a being sent into life with

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no knowledge of God or duty, and by necessity laid under the absolute control of the senses so long, that he begins to learn what he must know before he can love or obey a spiritual being, with a habit opposed to the means by which such knowledge is alone to be acquired. We mean, that the demand is too great as respects the evidence of the fact that there *is* something in the human constitution, of which religion is the result. All our other affections are of slow growth, maturing as the mind matures. The mind while developing *cannot* have a fixed character any further than the developement has proceeded. We love as we discover the objects to be loved, and have had the opportunity of being impressed by them. A child has no taste for what men most prefer, because it understands only as a child. If properly educated it acquires the taste. A love of learning, patriotism, and all the higher affections, whose objects and nature lie out of the range of mere sensation, must of necessity be subsequent to the attachments of sense. It is as common we think to find a religious education *resulting* in a religious character so far as it has proceeded, as it is to find learning and skill the consequence of a similar training. Nor are the *difficulties* in the way of religious nurture, any greater in comparison with the object in view, than those which hinder the success of schooling in any branch of knowledge, or training to any art. The mind is no more averse to impressions in favor of duty than to impressions of any other sort, taking into consideration the nature of the subject for which we seek to create a predilection.

We suppose it is not denied that the Creator designed man, when he gave him life, for a religious being, just as he designed him for a rational being, or a social being.

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Now in these latter cases we cannot doubt that there *is* something in the human *constitution*, of which the habits of a rational and social being are the result. Shall we presume less then of the religious habits? Did God give man a constitution in all respects adapted to the results he wished, except in the point of religion, for which mainly he was created? Have we a constitution, of which reason, social affections, and everything else we ever attain are *the results*, and is that constitution destitute of all the sources of religious character? Did God make us for religion with a constitution from which religion could *not* spring?

Human character is ascertained by actions we can scan. Apart from these, nothing is known to one man, of what pertains to another man's good or bad qualities. The fact that mankind are religious, a portion of the race at least, is granted. The fact that a portion of the race are vicious is granted. Now if you trace the latter to the human *constitution*, and say that vice is the result of something in our constitution, why can we not trace the former just in the same way, to constitution, and declare there is something in our constitution of which religion is the result? It is absurd to deny that a property of our nature is the origin of both, a property no more evil than good. God made us so, gave us such a constitution, that vice or virtue, religion or irreligion *might* be the result. As a matter of experience, we find sometimes one, and sometimes the other, or a mixture of both, to be the *actual result*. There is as truly a constitution from which good may issue, as a constitution from which sin may issue, a nature that fits us for religious action, as a nature for that which is not religious.

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All who admit that the present life is a probation, must grant that *antecedent* to this probation, the results of trial have no being in the subject to be proved; for if they had, if man were at birth already positively religious, had an actual character of virtue in hand, where is the ground for trying whether he will gain such a character or not? If you say, man is depraved in his nature, because he has not always a religious character, even from childhood, then you make probation a nullity. Or if you say that, provided man were not depraved, he *would* begin his probation under the influence of religion, you are placing the result before the process, the end before the means. Was it under the influence of religion, that Adam yielded to the temptation first presented? If not, then this theory of depravity drops. He was not natively depraved, since God declared his work good. Yet his moral exercises began no better, at most, than our own.

Dr Beecher's first source of proof is derived from experience. He turns to his audience, and inquires, "have religious affections found a place in your hearts from your earliest years? Do you believe that you are religious, and that you have been from the beginning?" But is this the way to prove his point? Because men are now of any character supposable, it does not follow that there is nothing in the human constitution of which a different character is not the natural result. As to the earliest affections, they were matters of experience, when we could not judge of their character, and *memory* is not to be relied upon, to settle the question *what* they were. We doubt not, however, there are, and have ever been not a few, whose religious affections were unfolded as

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early as their objects became known, and a direction was given toward them by the *means* requisite. How much earlier ought they to be? And again we must say, that to require in every case positively religious qualities at the beginning, as a proof that men have a constitution of which religion is the proper *result*, is to demand the result of a process before the process itself has been gone through, or even commenced, which is unreasonable enough.

Our author dwells upon the idea, that religion is itself a change, and not sin. But it is certain that sin *is* a change in every instance, if by that term we mean a perversion and deterioration of our nature, and not a change of a positively virtuous *character*, for one that is vicious. Character at birth we have none. Neither does a single act result in a character. Sin, as a character, is brought about by many and violent conflicts with conscience and reason. No man becomes at once corrupt. And so far as corrupt at all, he has become so, by *changing* a state of innocence, for one of repeatedly increasing and often aggravated guilt. Sin is the result of bad training. Religion of good training. But in the latter case the change is from innocence, the moral blank, to the acquisition of positive virtues; or else from a positively bad character which had succeeded to infant innocence, in which case, it proves only that whereas the man had corrupted himself, he is now reformed.—"Except ye be converted and become *as* little children, ye cannot enter the kingdom." This change is *turning back* to what we once were, for all were once little children. It is a change to the purity of an innocent nature. Our Saviour had other thoughts then of the

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human constitution, and early affections, than has our author.

The testimony alleged by pious persons in their own case, can cover no more than their own case. A man tells me he never had such affections as religion demands, before he was born again. They are new to him. So would they appear to him, on any supposition about his nature, provided he has been positively bad. Reformation always makes old things new. But the point to be proved is whether in *every* case, even that of the child as young as religion is possible at all, these affections would be a change also, a change from *bad* to *good*, not from mere innocence to actual character? We believe that we have no evidence of this. It is a presumption only. The first character, we have reason to believe, is according to the first training, and earliest impressions. When these have been religious, we find that commonly so too. The first character is, however *preceeded* by a state of mere innocence; of susceptibility and capacity for good or evil, but not of actual sinfulness or piety.

The next resort is to history. "Does the history of the world confirm the supposition, that man is religious by nature?" This depends on what Dr Beecher means by the phrase "religious by nature." If he intend that history shews man to possess a nature, the result of which is religion, we see not any deficiency in the proof. For amid all the crimes and woes it records, history shows nothing more clearly than that religion is the proper end of human nature; that the principles of the human constitution lead strongly to it; and that man is never satisfied with himself, while his reason and con-

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science retain their power, unless he is religious. What does the self-sacrificing heathen feel within his heart, to impel him to lay down life for his divinities? The working of the same principle, which prompts the pious Missionary of the cross to die for Christ. It is nature, human nature; erroneously operating, but still religiously. Had God revealed his love to the savage heart, as to the Christian, both had haply embraced one object, and beat in unison. But if our author design the phrase "religious by nature," to signify that man is by mere constitutional inclination apart from all moral training and instruction, religious, we make bold to aver that nobody has ever pretended that he is. No more is he rational, till reason is *by training* developed and exercised.

All Dr Beecher can infer from the crimes history records, is that the human constitution has in it such propensities as have led to these results. The reason why they resulted thus, is found, *not* in the propensities themselves, which are God's endowments, and may be innocently indulged in a measure; but in the various circumstances and influences under which they were unfolded and indulged, and in the guilty neglect of duty in him who thus perverted them, than to evil ends. But how do crimes prove that *only* crimes are the result of our constitution, that there is nothing in our constitution of which religion is the proper consequence?

Let the principle we oppose be allowed, and what must follow is plainly to be seen. God has given man a constitution, which contains *nothing*, no principle whatever, from which results religion. All we can do is to use well the constitution we have. If that be such as

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that religion is no consequence of it, however used, we are blameless. Pharaoh gave no materials to make bricks with, and yet exacted the work. Shall we say that God also has bestowed a nature, out of which religion does not spring, and yet requires of us, on eternal penalties, to be religious? Does he withold the material, and demand the product?

[For the Unitarian Advocate.]

"IN THE WORLD YE SHALL HAVE TRIBULATION;—BUT BE OF GOOD CHEER."
John xvi. 33.

THERE must be shade spots in the pilgrimage;
Our Father wills it so.—There lurks a thorn
Even in the rose-cup which we cull and wear
Next to our heart. What matters it?—The cloud,
The pang are transient;—but the hope that springs
From their stern ministry,—the faith that looks
Up to its God, when these low skies are dim,
Outweigh all miseries which this fleeting world
In her worst wrath can teach.—The Saviour knew
Her whole of tribulation,—yet he bade
Be of good cheer,—since in the shielded breast
Was power to overcome.—

——————— Wilt thou despair,
Thou born of God! because the shallow rills
Fed but by dew drops of terrestrial good,
Recede and vanish?—Sent awhile to share
Time's changes,—and on death's dark wing to rise
Above them all, why should a sway so brief
Appal the spirit?—Think how low thy brow,
Thy throbbing brow beneath the clods shall rest;
How soon forgotten 'mid its daily haunts
Thy form must be.—

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——— Another hand shall pluck
Thy cherish'd flowrets,—and a race unknown
Reap the ripe fruits of all thy sleepless care,
And thank thee not.—Another at thy board
Thy place shall fill, and in thy fireside chair
A stranger sit, while thou no more shalt claim
Note or remembrance.—This shall neutralize
Thy bitterness of spirit, where thy props
Are stricken from beneath thee,—or the grave
Bids thee pursue a lonely pilgrimage
Hiding thy bosom's idols.

——— Ask of God
To arm thy heart, even as the strippling youth
Who with the simple weapons of the brook
The vaunting giant slew. Be thy step firm,
And thy demeanor like some angel guest,
Patient of earth, yet for Heaven's bliss prepar'd. H.

OBITUARY.

Died in Boston, March 13th 1828, Mrs Rebecca Phillips, wife of Hon. Jonathan Phillips, and daughter of the late Samuel Salisbury, Esq.

The character we delight to remember, as that which was sustained by Mrs Phillips, was formed and nurtured by the discipline of the heart in holy retirement. She was often shut up from the world by personal sufferings. But she was blessed without the world's aid, in that sphere which allowed most exercise to the private virtues.—Serene, simple, unpretending, she required for her peace and joy, only her faith in God, and to see those over whom nature and duty gave her influence, rendered happy by her care. Her tastes were purely christian.

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Wealth was in her hand, but she was too humble in heart to regard it as valuable for its own sake. Her bounty was ever passing through some hidden channel, to such as she knew to be poor, and believed to be deserving. She loved to do good, but she did not love to be seen to do it. Her manner of dispensing benefits was such as to lift up the spirit of the sufferer, and forbid all painful sense of obligation. It was God who gave, by her hand.

A sensibility which was almost excessive, was in this lamented woman, so fortified by religious principle that she could comfort those for whose distress she bled. Her friends can never cease to recall her winning gentleness, her assiduous zeal to serve, her tender and disinterested kindness in every relation she bore to them. And she has bequeathed to society an example of what Christianity could do in imparting to an affluent condition the grace of humility, and the virtue of usefulness; and in training a soul in purity and peace for heaven, within reach of all which the world could offer to detain it beneath the skies. The name of Jesus was honored by her, with a fervor which betokened inward veneration. She was not ashamed to confess him in every way which her faith and his gospel demanded. But it seemed to be impossible for her to place her piety in a more conspicuous light than the simple acts of duty, themselves occasioned. Not to shine, nor to be called holy, but to please God, and be found of her Redeemer in peace, was the study of her life. There are undying memorials of her in many hearts below, and we humbly hope a far better and an eternal record in the heavens.

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THE ERRORS OF THE CHRISTIAN.

[From the Amulet.]

Blame not the spirit, blame the shrine!
  The frail, the human heart of sin,
Where oft religion's light divine
  Is sullied by the gloom within.

Then ere thou blame the faithful few
For speech unwise, or zeal undue,
Bid the quench'd dew-drops of the morn
Glitter as when they gemm'd the storm,
The trampled snow upon the earth,
Be pure as at its heavenly birth;
Expect thy roses in the storm,
Fadeless in hue, and fair of form,
And bid the limpid streamlet swell,
Bright through the city as the dell.

'Twere vain;—yet ev'n the sullied snow,
  Dimm'd flowers, fall'n dew, and darken'd rain,
Despite the *earthly* taint they show,
  Beauty and blessing scatter still.

SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

A VISIT TO THE SEA SIDE. In Two Parts. Bowles & Dearborne. 1828.

THE scarcity of good books for children is not owing merely to the difficulty of attaining perfect simplicity of expression. When a moral impression in particular is at-

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tempted, another hindrance to success lies in the wide difference between the moral habits of children and those of grown persons. *We* speak from *reflection* and *principle*, and especially when we are endeavoring to benefit the young ; and, to a certain extent, this is well. We speak of things as they appear to us, after the teachings of experience and the discipline of half a lifetime have formed our minds to habits of general thoughts and long drawn conclusions. This mode of communication is, no doubt, advantageous to children, as far as it serves to impart our light, and enables the learner in morals to avoid evil by shunning it in anticipation.

But, again, it is an unavoidable evil that much of our instruction should seem far fetched and often inapplicable to those, who have made so little progress in the long journey which we have perhaps nearly accomplished. Children and youth act on *impulse*, chiefly ; and our instruction to them, if we would have it become intelligible and interesting, must not deal too much in *inference and premeditation*. Unnatural characters, and therefore uninstructive ones, are, in the estimation of children, those which seem carefully built up by plan and method, and which exhibit a mechanical and artificial perfection, instead of the buoyancy and the freedom of nature. Nor do we think it can safely be denied that there is too much of this forced instruction obtruded on children. In the simple elements of childhood, there is a world of means of good and lasting influence, without travelling into the region of mature thought and reflection; and the author of the admirable story now before us, has used these materials freely and with fine effect. Her children are all *children*—not in childishness, but in genuine, un-

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affected, and rational feeling, flowing from hearts neither too good nor too bad for the average of childhood, but just such as we may read every day in the looks and actions and tones of the children around us. The moral improvement imparted to the children in the course of the story, is natural and unpretending, flows out of the circumstances in which the actors are placed, and is silent and gradual, never extravagant nor romantic, nor strikingly vapid. The whole party find that their visit to the sea side has made them wiser and better than before, because it has served to bring them better acquainted with themselves, and enabled them to guard against their weaknesses, and rise above their peculiar foibles and faults.—There is little pretence in all this, but a vast deal actually done for the usefulness and the happiness of life.

In the construction of books for children, an unnecessary excitement of the *imagination* has been a prevalent fault. This, we think, is judiciously shunned in the present instances, and the absence of a romantic interest is more than atoned for by the easy and natural strain of the narrative, which is not allowed to divert the young reader's mind from its moral intention, by the imaginative and high wrought character of the incidents. The story is one of every day life, and possesses the attraction of family scenes, as they usually are; and the reader not unfrequently forgets that it is but a story, and becomes personally engaged in the conversation and sentiments of the characters. These, we may observe, too, are exceedingly natural; they bear every mark of being sketches from life: each portrait is strikingly individual and complete, and is sustained throughout in the same style; so that we become personally and intimately ac-

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quainted with every member of the juvenile circle introduced to us.

Another fault too common among writers for children, the author of this story has carefully avoided. There is no unnatural *excess of sentiment.* The delineations of feeling are chaste, and true to nature and early life. The children are not immersed occasionally in a "flood of tears," at some real or imaginary sorrow; nor are they every now and then "rushing into each other's arms," "embracing tenderly," &c. They possess feeling and temper too; but they are such as we observe in real life; not those which a perverted taste has copied from the silliest class of novels. The overdrawn affection in most books for children is meant, no doubt, to cherish the spirit of love. But does it produce this effect; or does it not rather form characters which the young readers think good on the whole, but remarkably silly on some occasions? What we ought to cultivate in children is not an occasional fondness, but a steady and habitual tenderness, a sincere and consistent regard for one another, a genuine good will which is ready to act at all times and in every way. In this respect, the book before us imparts much good influence, by the mutual concessions and accommodations on the part of the children, and in the advances which they make in disinterested affection, and true kindness of spirit.

The story in short, is one which we should be happy to see in every family, and which deserves a place in every school library.

THE SCHOOL, OR LESSONS IN MORALS.—NO. I, II, III, AND IV.

THEY who have tried it, know well how vain it is to expect a good rule to be always remembered and applied as

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often as it ought to be, merely because it has been solemnly announced in the course of formal tuition, or at a moment when a grave mood invites us to repeat the ready caution, "be a good child."—We take it for granted that the earnest listener knows what being good is. We incline to trust, at least such rules as those which relate to veracity, honesty, and the like plain qualities, to the child's own heart, for interpretation. But indeed we are not warranted in this by any experience, nor by human nature. Principles and precepts are slowly apprehended by very many who are not deficient in sense. And after these are so learned that a mistake as to their meaning is not likely to be made, yet is it very probable that the learner shall never think of them, in the midst of those occurrences and employments, to which they are directly applicable. The child has little or no power to carry about a set of injunctions expressed to him in words only, so that they shall come into use in his own concerns, just when they ought.

These Moral Lessons are conveyed in a better way. A series of incidents, familiar, domestic, such as happen every day in the walks of humble life, such as exactly suit the case of a group of children at a common school, who have all hard-working parents at home, and must make the best use of very small means and a very little time for gaining what knowledge they need, are the basis on which they are founded. All is narrative, but the children are the narrators, for the most part. They tell one another what has happened, and make their own remarks. These incidents are exceedingly simple, and yet are made to involve great practical principles. They are virtues or vices, in actual examples—such virtues and such vices as are most likely to be found in the humblest sphere of life.

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The operations of conscience are clearly developed in the children's reflections and after conduct or condition. Everything is defined that needed to be for a child's use, and all is so arranged that the little reader sees at once the moral truth, the precept which is built upon that truth, and the important consequences, flowing from the obedience required. Then instead of actually formed characters, there are many introduced who are just *trying* to be good, and all the meaning of *effort* is carried home to the child's mind. There are faults corrected in the course of the stories, and thus *repentance* is illustrated. The distinction between great and little sins, or we should say rather, the necessary relation of the one to the other is set forth, so that the moral truth on the subject is felt as it can only be by such evidence as facts supply. How to put in practice all that is learned at school, and at church, is excellently taught here. And the relation between piety and morals is strongly marked.

The language chosen by this writer is the very plainest, and yet the style is good, and the whole book suited to the proposed object. We wish it may be distributed widely among the laboring class, though it is by no means limited in its utility, to any grade in life.

INTELLIGENCE.

French Protestants.—A unitarian clergyman, Rev. S. Wood, travelling in the south of France, wrote thus, respecting the state of the protestant interest, to the Editor of the Monthly Repository, a few months since. "I have endeavored wherever I went, to become acquainted with the Protestant Pastors, and the statements which I shall make, are founded on their testimony, as well as on that of other intelligent persons whom I met with. The result of

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my inquiries is, that the majority of the French Protestants are Arians; not, indeed, that they would profess themselves such, if asked what their opinions are, but, if questioned more closely, they would be found to be so in point of fact. With regard to the Atonement, I have been assured by a very sensible man, that they are, to use his expression, "Arminians in a large sense." Those of the pastors who entertain these sentiments, are a very numerous and an increasing body. The organ of this party is the *Revue Protestante*, which appears at Paris on the 15th of every month. Of the minority, the greater part may be described as orthodox, i. e. Trinitarians, without being Calvinists. The rest are Calvinists. These are an active, perhaps an increasing body. The organ of the Calvinistic party is the *Archives du Christianisme*. The prospects of an increase of numbers among the Protestants are exceedingly cheering."

Shuckford's History.—Dr Russell, Episcopal Minister at Leith, is continuing the work of Shuckford on the connexion between sacred and profane history.

Greek War.—Dr Howe, who has resided in Greece during most of the period of its struggle for independence, is about publishing a History of the Greek revolution, from its commencement.

The Sabbath in New-York.—A petition has been lately presented to the Common Council in the city of New York, upwards of *ninety feet long*, with two tiers of names abreast, praying that means may be taken to effect the closing of the shops on Sunday.

New Periodicals.—Just announced are the following periodicals.

Repository and Christian Review, edited by Professors Ripley and Chase, of the Baptist Seminary at Newton. *Quarterly.*

Magazine of the German Reformed Church, by the Theological Seminary at Gettysburgh. *Monthly.*

Evangelical Museum—Fayetteville, N. C.

Virginia and North Carolina Preacher.

Western Preacher.

Home Missionary and American Pastor's Journal—New York.

We have received a communication with the signature "S," and regret extremely that it is, by a press of matter, excluded from the present number. It shall appear in our next.

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THE

UNITARIAN, ADVOCATE.

VOL. I. JUNE, 1828. No. VI.

SOME ERRORS RESPECTING THE METHOD OF PARDON IN THE DIVINE GOVERNMENT.

It has been an almost universal opinion that in the government of God, the natural course of Mercy was, in the case of the truest penitence, as completely obstructed, as by obduracy and abandonment in the offender. Indeed, God could only pardon by means of an expedient, provided for the very purpose of enabling him to do so. And yet we cannot, and none will deny, that God is in his own nature placable, disposed to forgive. How now is this? Our Creator has in himself the love which prompts to mercy, and he is also at the same moment a perfectly just being. The purest and strictest rectitude and the mildest and most relenting compassion actually coexist in the divine mind, and yet they cannot both be expressed in the natural way, but only by means of some interposing expedient. God may *be* merciful in his own nature, he may feel a sincere desire to save the erring and guilty creature; but this desire must not go out in any positive act naturally flowing from it. Can we believe these qualities and affections to be any less right when in action, than before?

We know it will here be said that it was mercy which

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led the Creator to provide the atoning sacrifice. If you interpret that phrase, however, as it always is interpreted, the remark is unfounded. The doctrine of atonement, as it is commonly defined, teaches that God *punished* Jesus for human sins; for every sin which he ever has or ever will remit. If so, unless it be mercy that prompts to punish, no human sin is remitted in mercy. It was justice that went forth to slay the substituted victim. How much less merciful would God have shewn himself, had no such victim been provided, but every human soul been left to perish in its guilt? He is said to have *now* inflicted suffering equivalent to, nay greater than that which the everlasting torments of all our race would have implied. Here then, God seems quite as unmerciful in saving, as he *could* have appeared if he had *not* saved mankind. He has manifested *as much* wrath in the agony he awakened in the bleeding Saviour, as he would have exhibited in the eternal wailings of a damned world. If all souls had perished hopelessly, their ruin had been no display of compassion. The death on Calvary is declared to be an event equally replete with the proofs of the divine anger. If so, the word mercy may be expunged from the Christian's vocabulary.

But some will say, Christ was not called to endure an equal penalty. Then they are not taught by such instructors as have authority in the orthodoxy of the day. A late writer,* in his sermons on the death of Christ, thus affirms. "His death was to be *at least* as strong an expression of the divine displeasure, against the sins of all mankind, as their eternal confinement in the

* Rev. S. E. Dwight.

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prison of his wrath." Again he says "Punishment *is* the manifestation of displeasure against sin." Now we again entreat to know, how much *less* mercy had been shown in the world's hopeless perdition, than in the punishment which was *at least, as strong* an instance of divine wrath? And if the Supreme Being did actually inflict a penalty as great as *could* be inflicted in the case, or one which proved his displeasure equally, where was the mercy of the sacrifice of Jesus?

Times have not so changed but that the language we shall next quote has too many imitations, in the common phraseology of the present period. Dr Barrow, the eminent theologian and mathematician, has in his sermon on the Passion, these words, "Who should *dare* to put himself between God and us, or offer to *screen* mankind from the divine wrath and vengeance?" "He [Christ] was to labor with the pangs of charity, and through his heart to be pierced with deepest commiseration of our wretched case; he was to pass through the hottest furnace of divine vengeance, and by his blood to quench the wrath of heaven; his grief was to supply the defects of our remorse, and his suffering to *countervail* the eternal torments due to us." *Ser. 2d vol.* 313. Compare with this these extracts from Watts's Hymns, a book which furnishes the weekly psalmody of nearly all our churches.

"Is there no shelter from the eye
Of a revenging God?

* * * * *

"Rich were the drops of Jesus' blood
That calmed his frowning face,
That sprinkled o'er the burning throne
And turned the wrath to grace."

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Add to these yet one more. Dr Smalley, a divine whose reputation for orthodoxy is very high among our brethren, says, "Not all the curses of the law, nor even the execution of those curses in the unquenchable flames of hell, gave, or can ever give, equal evidence of the righteousness or wrath of God, as the amazing scenes exhibited in Gethsemane, and on Calvary." *Sermon entitled, None but Believers, &c.*

We can imagine all this to be descriptive of what is called "vindictive justice," but not how it is appropriate to represent an act of pure mercy, divine compassion. Indeed, is it not plain, that so far as mercy was concerned in the punishment inflicted on Jesus for sins not his own, that mercy was in the victim's heart, and only there? He commiserated, but Heaven revenged. The Father's wrath was quenched when it was poured upon his Son,—quenched in innocent blood. Do these considerations aid us in conceiving what infinite love imports?

It is replied to all this, that to us the punishment inflicted on Jesus was the means of forgiveness, and therefore we may see in that the divine compassion for ourselves. Just as we should feel the kindness of a creditor who consented to let us go free, when he had found one generous enough to pay the whole debt we owed. Or rather, as we should understand the mercy of a king who should capriciously seize an innocent subject, to be executed as a condition to the release of all the criminals in his realm. These criminals, no doubt, have cause to rejoice in their own escape, but can they help glancing a pitying eye at the substitute, or ever be so deceived as to think his unmerited doom any sign of the lenient temper of their prince? Mercy *is* mercy no longer, when it

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exacts all that the strictest and most inexorable severity could require. The person punished may be one or many, the just or the unjust, but the disposition in the exactor is all the same.

It is pungently remarked by an orthodox writer on this subject, that deserved forgiveness is no forgiveness. Now we suppose that if the element of Merit enter, in fact, into the method of pardon, and that merit be passed to the benefit of the subjects of forgiveness, the question whence it proceeds and how it was raised, cannot alter the character of the transaction so far as the mercy of the lawgiver is concerned. His good-will to the released criminal was *procured* by that merit; the one balances the other; the merit is the ground of pardon. We are at a loss to perceive how such a pardon can be regarded as flowing from pure compassion. Mercy to merit, is only another name for retributive justice. It is not unknown to any one, that the common doctrine on this subject ascribes human forgiveness to the Saviour's meritorious death, in such a sense as to give that an efficacy with God, which perfect obedience in ourselves would have had, if such virtue were possible. That is, he *merited* God's favor for us, when we were ourselves unprofitable sinners. If this be salvation by free grace, what must be salvation by strict law? All the claims of law upon mankind, both of punishment and of obedience, were by Christ completely satisfied. What more remains, but for us to enjoy the good things legally our due, in case he was indeed our substitute? For this we have orthodox warrant. President Edwards remarks as follows. "The justice of God, that required man's damnation, and seemed inconsistent with his salvation, now does as much re-

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quire the salvation of those that believe in Christ, as ever it required their damnation; salvation is an absolute debt to the believer from God, so that he may in justice demand and challenge it, not upon the account of what he himself has done, but upon the account of what his surety has done for him. For Christ has satisfied justice fully for his sin; so that it is but a thing that may be challenged, that God should now release the believer from punishment. The believer may demand eternal life, because it has been merited by Christ." *First set of Posthumous Sermons.*

We need not lead our readers through the mazes of imputed sin and imputed righteousness, transferred guilt and transferred merit, notions which imply that all which exposes men to punishment was attached to the Saviour as his, when he died for our sins; and on the other hand, that all which was meritorious in him was made ours by a like dispensation. It is seen in the very terms themselves, that there could not be any call for gratuitous mercy in a transaction so entrenched in legal forms.

Our remarks are limited for the present to the single topic of Divine Mercy as it is affected by the theories respecting the mode of forgiveness, which are prevalent. It seems to us that this quality is quite removed from any expedient which lays *punishment* and *merit* at the foundation of pardon. But the Holy Scriptures do most assuredly ascribe the remission of sins to the tender mercies of our God! And in the nature of things it must be so. Were there no lenity with God, no pity for a frame so weak attacked by temptations so powerful, nor compassion for penitence when it does its best to repair the injuries which it laments to have committed, what hope

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for us could be found? God commendeth his love to us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Be the influence then, of our Saviour's death, what it may, we are sure it was not anger, but affection, which it manifested. This none will in terms deny, while many will yet say, that Christ was punished in our stead. We add then, that it is no less clearly stated by the sacred writers, that Jesus was *not* forsaken by his Father nor subjected to his anger, when he was suffered to be crucified. Our Lord himself declares, "Therefore doth my Father *love* me, because I lay down my life. Behold, the hour cometh, yea is now come, that ye shall be scattered every man to his own, and shall leave me alone; and yet I am *not* alone, because the Father is with me." In allusion to his approaching sufferings he exclaims, "Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in him. God shall also glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him." In the garden, where his agony was so great, we are assured that aid was imparted by God from heaven, to support him. With holy confidence he had prayed to his Father just before, and had said, "Now come I to thee! Father, glorify thy Son!" We can discover no cause for the belief of some, that God at this very moment was preparing to inflict tortures inconceivable and unmerited, upon the mind of Jesus. As everything indicates in our Saviour an undiminished piety, to say no more, so all shews, that God, to whom with his dying breath he committed his spirit, had not left him to his enemies without comfort, far less was aggravating by his own secret agency, the pains he endured. How *can* any man believe, after perusing the evangelical history, that Jesus died beneath the invisible but irresistible strokes of divine anger on his soul?

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The doctrine of atonement, as it is commonly maintained, obliges us to pitch upon the last scenes of Jesus' life as those in which God inflicted on Jesus the penalties of his law, even such as countervail the eternal woes of hell. And yet in no part of his history do we find stronger evidences of a sublime confidence in his Father's love. Was our Lord deceived in supposing that he was still beloved, when, it is pretended, he was deserted and made subject to the divine wrath? If that was a penal suffering which Jesus endured in Gethsemane, how happened it to be *alleviated* by the Judge and Lawgiver who was then inflicting it? We are constrained to believe that whatever was the occasion of our Saviour's sorrow, it was not mingled with any sense of divine anger, so often as we read those touching words addressed to Peter, "The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" It is not thus that the apprehension of the insupportable displeasure of his Father would have been expressed; nor, in the awful moment of its visitation, should we have heard, "Nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done!"

[*To be continued.*]

MORAL INABILITY.

Can man do his duty? Make this inquiry in the places of trade and commercial resort, in the market, in the court of justice, wherever men exact service from each other, or have occasion to enforce moral obligation, and you are likely to be answered with a smile that will

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show there is absurdity in the question. That every human being *can* do all which he is *obliged* to do, is by all mankind acted upon as the plainest principle in morals, and what common sense and experience have settled long ago. Nobody admits as an excuse for a fraud, that the perpetrator was weak in his moral nature, and had no power to be fair in his dealings. Nor would it help a thief to plead that he was unable to keep his hands off from what did not belong to him. Public opinion, civil law, and individual conscience, agree in disowning such inability.

But the power to do *one* duty implies power to do all. It cannot be said we have power to do right in the shop, and no power to do right in the house, power to do our duty to our families, and no power to do our duty to our neighbors, power to be just and none to be temperate, power to be true to man, and no power to be true to God. All which we are obliged to do, we can do, and must do, or, but for divine mercy, suffer the penalty. Our obligations are not changed by the variety of our duties. Nor is our power to discharge those obligations diminished or increased, by the like diversity. Moral obligation, that which our nature as moral beings imposes, comprehends every relation we stand in to God and one another, and lies no less heavily upon us in piety than in justice.

It is well known probably, by most of our readers, how much importance has been attached to the confession of our utter helplessness and impotence by nature. The common language on the subject is such as the following, which we quote from standard authorities.—Calvin writes thus. "It has long been a common opinion that the *faculties* of men are coextensive with the requirements of

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the divine law, but it proceeds from a total want of acquaintance with the law." And quoting from Augustine, "God requires what we *cannot* perform, in order that we may know what we ought to seek from him." *Inst.* B. II. *chap.* V. 6, 7, *&c.* The Catechism of the Reformed Dutch Church says, "Are we then so corrupt that we are wholly *incapable* of doing any good, and are inclined to all wickedness? Indeed we are. Doth not God then do injustice to man by requiring from him, in his law, that which he *cannot* perform? Not at all." Dr Scott, in his commentary on Genesis, declares, "*All capacity* of delighting in holy services, *is extinct* in every descendant of Adam." President Edwards in his works has used these expressions, "When man sinned, God left him; therefore immediately, the superior divine principles wholly *ceased:* so light ceases in a room when the candle is withdrawn; and thus man was left in a state of darkness, woful corruption, and ruin,—nothing but flesh without spirit. The inferior principles of self-love and natural appetite, being left to themselves, *of course* became reigning principles, having *no* superior principles to regulate or control them." Vol. VI. pp. 428, 429, &c.

It is obvious that nothing less than an absolute inability, a literal want of capacity and power to do good, is here implied. The defect lies in the constitution itself, in the faculties we possess at birth. We find it accordingly represented by many as a punishment inflicted for Adam's sin. Dr Smalley informs us in his sermon on the subject, that "Some account for God's suspending our salvation on *impossible* conditions, and condemning men for not doing what it is not in their power to do, by observing that *we lost our power* by the fall. Our present weakness

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and blindness were brought upon us as a righteous punishment for the disobedience of Adam; and God has not lost his right to command, because man has lost his ability to obey. That is, we *ought* to exert, not only all the strength we actually have, but all we *should* have had, had it not been for the apostacy."

Such statements refute themselves. They were made, doubtless, with a design thereby to exalt the divine grace, on which mankind by this natural impotence are entirely thrown, as the sole source of the power which we need, to perform our duty. But the wisdom, equity, and goodness of our Creator, are exposed to dishonor among men, by this theory. His wisdom; for what can we think of that contrivance, which thus defeats its own ends? If God intended the human race to be moral agents, why cut off the very part of their nature which is essential to that end, at the moment when the first individual began to use it? Why not at birth bestow now the needed power to those, whom he wishes to be virtuous? If wisdom require a suitable adaptation of powers to actions expected, of means to purposes and ends, we find it not in such a scheme of things, as brings into being an agent, who is required to perform certain services, without the ability which renders those services even possible. Nor is the divine equity less implicated. For the heart and conscience of every man will tell him, that it is not just, to punish us for Adam's sin by the loss of every faculty which obedience supposes us to possess, and then punish us again for disobedience, which we had no power to avoid. And what is the goodness of such a doom? How does love manifest itself here? We see none. For the help which is supposed to be given to a few, restoring

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them the power which all had lost, while the great majority are suffered to perish without aid, is no proof of benevolence. A wise, righteous, and kind being, would exact no more than could be rendered, and punish, not for *impotence inherited*, but for power wasted and abused.

There is a quibble, we can call it by no better name, which many writers have introduced in their arguments on this subject, and which is thought to vindicate the doctrine they advocate, from these objections. It is this. There are, say they, two kinds of inability; the one, natural or physical, such as consists in the want of the faculties necessary for obedience, or of power in the literal and proper sense; the other moral, consisting in a depraved disposition only, and found in connexion with *all* needful power to do what is commanded. It is want of heart, of inclination, of will. We could obey, if we were so disposed. There is natural capacity, but nobody chooses to use it. We cannot do right, as those cannot see who will never open their eyes. Now it is very true, that such an impossibility as a man's own perverse temper or habitual wickedness creates, is no excuse for sin. But this, we must remember, holds true only while we suppose the man's perversity and vicious habit, were the fruit of indulgences which he has had power to refuse himself. An intemperate sot *may* be so far gone, as without a miracle to be incapable of restoration; his physical and moral nature being destroyed together; but if the cups were each *forced* to his lips, or if he had been *deceived* in every instance, and made ignorantly to swallow the deadly draught, his ruin would be no fault of his. Select any example of any sin, and let the disposition to it be what it may, there must have been at some period

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an ability to abstain from that vice, and practise the opposite, or it is guiltless. If a man *is born* with a perverse heart, it is no fault in him to have that heart, nor is anything flowing from it criminal, unless he was also born with a principle of some kind, which puts it in his power to acquire better dispositions.

Let us appeal to experience, and seek for those inclinations which lead us into sin. In some, there is a great strength and impetuosity of the animal nature. Their vices are sensual. But are the senses their *only* endowments? Has God given them no principle which, at the same time that these lusts prompt and urge to crime, do very powerfully draw them in a contrary direction? He has. Every man has a conscience. And it is certain, that however violent and excessive the propensities to sin may become, *after* repeated indulgences, *before* such indulgences, they are not so powerful as to admit no restraint. The mind has a self-controlling power, which may be and is put forth in the moment of temptation, and by means of which, many have escaped moral ruin, when solicited most urgently from without, and by their own desires also.

Not only the senses, but the angry emotions, the pride, the ambition, the love of ease, the love of money, selfishness in all its forms, and desire in all its strength, *have been conquered* by those, who were conscious of their presence and activity, and suppressed them. It is matter of history and experience, that *all* the passions and lusts common to our nature, have been subdued to a subordination to reason and conscience. What has been done, may be done. The fact shows the power. All vices arrive at their extremes only by passing over and beating

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down, a resisting principle. By submitting to conscience, the mind strengthens its power of self-government. The first subjection of desire may be brought about by a very hard struggle. But the second struggle is less—the third less again. This shows that our Creator has made provision in our constitution, for our duties. It proves that such a disinclination to what is right as is *unconquerable*, is not and cannot be the earliest state of the moral nature. It is only after long-repeated indulgences, that resistance becomes impossible or vain. And it is only after a like succession of struggles against its power, that conscience ceases to have strength enough to control the will.

Dr Smalley observes, "Wherever anything in ourselves or without us, is really absolutely inconsistent with our doing a thing, we have no way fully and strongly enough to express that inconsistence, but by saying we are *unable*, we *cannot*, it is *impossible*." Very true. But who does not know that there are in *all men* the *same* sources of sin; and that *any* man is no other way rendered *incapable* of *any* vice, than by having long cherished the principles God has implanted in every bosom, which are inconsistent with that vice? Here is a covetous man. Was he born covetous? Why are not all men covetous? Because they have not all, like him, permitted the desire of gain to grow, while the moral principle was left uncultivated. The desire itself is common to all. All would be swayed by it to nearly the same excess, if some did not balance it by the opposite qualities, acquired and cherished by the proper means. Had the covetous man yielded to *all* that was in his nature, to reason and conscience not less than the natural desires, he had been no slave to pelf. And so of all sins. It is not the natural propensity to

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anything, which renders us unable to seek its opposite, but our *resisting* the promptings of the higher, in order to obey those of the lower nature. We resist conscience, and become slaves to desire. We resist desire, and conscience reigns. Power to do either is common to all men. Else have we no liberty, no choice for good or evil, but must be what foreign impulses shall compel us to be.

The divine grace is, we think, far more gloriously displayed, in the act of diffusing new vigor into the soul, whose present power is all virtuously applied, than in selecting a mind in complete moral torpor, asleep, dead, doing nothing for itself, and making it holy by his own irresistible impressions upon its impotent, inert nature. It corresponds with all we are taught of divine influences, to believe they are God's gift, for the furtherance of good endeavors, the cherishing of holy purposes and pure desires, and the succeeding of unsparing efforts in the work of duty. But we cannot so much admire the decree which sends down the holy spirit upon stagnant waters, and applies divine agency to do the work which sloth and sin have refused to undertake. We adore the love which bends over the suffering, struggling, toiling mind, to sooth, and help, and recompense. We delight to believe that prayer is heard when labor is earnest, and faithful. But that God should come unsought to slumbering, lazy, wicked spirits, and *drive* them to their task, we hesitate to admit, for it is derogatory to him, and degrading to the nature he has given us.

Surely it is no sin to say, that what God commands, man *can* perform. And we see no reason to limit the word *can* to mere physical ability, nor any use in the

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supposition that a disability of *any* sort is entailed upon us at our birth. For all that is native in us, is the gift of Him who made us. And all which is depraved, may be traced to causes which were under our own control, or if not, so far as it is not, we are blameless.

GOD IS LOVE.

God is love. To this truth, everything around and within us bears ample and unequivocal testimony. What but infinite benevolence could have prompted him, when perfectly happy in himself, to send into the boundless fields of space such an infinite variety of worlds? What but this could have caused him to create man, and subject to his dominion this lower world, with its innumerable millions of the brute creation? Nothing but infinite love. God must necessarily be a perfect being. And because a perfect being, he must consequently be perfectly happy. Not then to increase his own happiness, has he given existence to men, but solely for their happiness. Can this be doubted?

When we consider ourselves, the variety of objects by which we are surrounded, our capacities and means of enjoyment, can we doubt that God made us for happiness?—happiness temporal and eternal? Can we contemplate the heavens, the work of his fingers; the sun which he has appointed to rule the day, shining in his strength; the moon which he has ordained to watch the night, walking in her brightness; and the starry host with which the heavens are adorned, without being solemnly impressed that these works of his power and wisdom were intended to increase *our* happiness? Can we

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survey the beauties and blessings and wonders of nature; the green carpet that covers the earth; the variety of flowers and plants and trees that spring from her bosom; the valleys, clothed with the autumnal harvest; the hills and plains, covered with flocks and herds; the waters, stored with fish; and the groves, resounding with the cheerful melody of the feathered songsters, without acknowledging that these unfailing pledges of his love are given for *our* happiness? Can we consider the sublime operations of intellect; the boundless stores of knowledge; our means and capacities for holding converse with the wise and great of past and present time; and our ability to soar beyond the bounds of earth on the wings of imagination, without confessing that these fruits of paternal love were designed solely for *our* happiness? Can we experience the delights of society and friendship and love; the tender charities of the domestic circle; the satisfaction of virtuous habits, and the smiles of an approving conscience, without knowing that these blessings of a Father's love make us happy? Can we seriously meditate on the character of God; on the love and resurrection and Gospel of his Son; on our destination to a future, a never-ending state of existence; can we enter the service of our Father in heaven, give him the undivided homage of our souls, and hold sacred communion with the eternal ONE, without *feeling* that he *is* love; that we were made for happiness; that we ARE happy? O no. These are arguments which the power of sophistry can never shake. They stand as firm as the throne of heaven.

God not only made man for happiness, but he has ever done what was consistent with his moral freedom to pro-

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mote his happiness. When man had suffered the law that is in his members to triumph over the law that is in his mind; when he had disobeyed the voice of conscience, and fell from his primitive innocence; when from a feeling of self-condemnation, he had voluntarily withdrawn from spiritual worship, and consequently from pure happiness, his Maker had compassion on his self-inflicted misery; still loved him as before; and took new measures to bring his wandering feet into the paths of peace. He called Abram, the father of the faithful, to separate from the prevailing idolatry and corruption; and directed him to establish the worship of the one true God of heaven and earth. He gave a promise that in him and in his seed, all nations should be ultimately blessed. Afterward he revealed himself to Moses, the lawgiver and temporal saviour of the Jewish nation; and continued his revelation, at successive periods, to the favored people, by the holy prophets. This revelation, though imperfect, being only the promise of better things to come, was sufficient to guide those to happiness who followed its glimmering light. Many followed and were happy, were blessed with prosperity in life, and at a good old age were gathered to their fathers in peace. But the number of the faithful decreased, until the last breathings of acceptable worship seemed vanishing from the earth. At this most proper season, this fulness of time, the Star of Bethlehem arose. The song of angels was heard in Judea, proclaiming—glory to God in the highest; and on earth peace, good will to man; and announcing the birth of Jesus of Nazareth, the Saviour of the world.

At the age of thirty years, when Jesus received baptism from his forerunner John, the holy spirit descended

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upon him, and qualified him for his godlike undertaking. He then entered upon his ministry; and proved by his labors, his instructions, his sufferings, his death, resurrection and ascension, that he was sent by the Father to be the Saviour of the world. His labors were abundant. He healed the sick, fed the hungry, comforted the sorrowful, cleansed the leprous; restored soundness to the lame, sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, and life to the dead. His instructions were divine. He declared the paternal character and essential benignity of God, and the spirituality of his worship and kingdom. He gave motives and rules for the regulation of human conduct in all its relations; and exemplified their happy influence in every scene of his eventful life. He has left for our instruction and consolation the words of eternal life; and for our imitation a spotless example. His sufferings were various and intense. He was exposed to the contradiction of sinners; he was borne down by the agonies of the garden; he submitted to the ignominious and excruciating death of the cross. By his resurrection, our immortality is demonstrated; and by his ascension to his God and Father, we are assured that mansions will be provided for all his obedient followers. All his labors were performed, all his instructions were given, all his sufferings were endured, to rescue man from ignorance, and error, and sin, and misery, and death, and qualify him for present improvement and happiness, and eternal felicity. Could anything but disinterested love have prompted God to plan and Jesus to execute this dispensation of mercy and benevolence; a dispensation intended solely for human happiness?

And what has been the effect of this Gospel dispensa-

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tion? Beneficial. Human happiness has been increased in the same degree in which mankind have obeyed the precepts and imitated the example of the anointed Jesus; in the same degree in which his divine religion has exerted its saving influence on the hearts and lives of individuals. And this influence has not been small. No. Notwithstanding the early corruption of its primitive simplicity by its heathen converts, and the early perversion of its plainest doctrines, duties, and ordinances; notwithstanding the long, dark night of monkish ignorance and papal superstition, and the unintelligible, nonsensical disputes of the schoolmen; notwithstanding the oceans of innocent blood which its pretended friends have caused to be shed in days of persecution and holy warfare, and the unchristian spirit and immoral conduct of its self-deceived votaries; notwithstanding the scurrilous, and witty, and ingenious attacks of its enemies, and the mountain mass of creeds, and confessions, and formularies of faith which its fearful, misguided, zealous believers have heaped upon it, until its heaven-born form and spirit have nearly disappeared; notwithstanding all that it has suffered from friends and foes, it has not only survived and spread, but produced salutary and happy effects wherever it has been embraced. Its good effects have been proportioned to the degree of purity in which it has been received and obeyed.

When Jesus appeared on earth, mankind were sunk into the most deplorable ignorance of everything relating to the existence and character of the one true God; the nature and object of his moral government; his designs respecting his human family; and the performance of acceptable worship and obedience. With a few excep-

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tions, they were fallen to the lowest depths of mental darkness and servitude, tormented with the vilest superstitions, given to the practice of the most abominable immoralities, and wedded to a system of the grossest idolatry; and woman was the unhappy victim of domestic tyranny, servile drudgery, watchful jealousy, mental degradation, and moral debasement. But thanks to Heaven, a spark of that divine love which emanated from the bosom of God, and shone with such brilliancy in the character of Jesus, soon entered the soul of degraded man; the celestial fire was kindled on the altar of his heart; its heat and light spread a purifying influence far and wide; and an extensive revolution in the moral and religious world ensued. The worship of the one true God was resumed. The precepts of the Saviour were obeyed. The social and domestic affections were called into exercise. The benevolent sympathies of humanity were awakened. Hospitals and asylums for every species of misery and suffering have been their fruits. And woman was restored to that equal participation in the refined enjoyments of literature and religion; to that equal rank in society; and to that high place in the affections of man, for which God designed her.

Would you see more clearly the influence of Christianity on your social, and domestic, and religious enjoyments; you have only to compare the present social, domestic, and religious state of India, the most enlightened of any unchristian nation, with that of your own favored community. If in imagination, or in reality, you visit her shores, you may see her females, debarred from all the delights of society and friendship; doomed to ignorance and hopeless servitude; and degraded to a state

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of mere animal existence. You may see her living infants, swelling the tide of the sacred Ganges; and her living widows consigned to the flames of a hellish superstition; and her sick and aged, left to linger out the last horrors of earthly existence, far from the attentions of kindred and friends. You may see her temples of idol worship, polluted with the most loathsome and infernal practices, and stained with the blood of human victims.

Our own community presents a different picture for contemplation. Society is adorned by woman. Literature is enriched by the fruits of her intellect. The infant mind receives its first, its best, its most lasting impressions from her maternal care. And home is rendered a scene of the purest earthly happiness by her presence. The sickly infant is nurtured with all the tenderness of a fond mother's affection; and if her kindness and her prayers cannot save its life, its soul is entrusted to guardian angels for conveyance to the bosom of that ascended Saviour, who, while on earth, took little children in his arms, and blessed them as the pure in heart. The bereaved widow finds consolation in the hour of agonizing sorrow, in the assurance of a happy reunion beyond the grave. The last hours of the sick and aged are made as comfortable as the unwearied attentions and kind sympathies of filial affection and christian love can make them; and when the moment of dissolution arrives, their spirits are committed by the voice of christian faith to the hands of Him who is unchangeable love. The temples of religion are consecrated to the worship of the one true God, the universal Father. Their doors are thrown open for the admission of all classes without distinction. The sacrifice most

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acceptable is the homage of contrite, and grateful, and devout hearts. The instructions there given are for the regulation of human conduct in all its relations. And the worshippers there learn to rejoice in the ennobling and inspiring belief, that after a faithful discharge of all their duties, in this state of suffering and enjoyment, they shall enter upon an incorruptible existence, and unite with all the ransomed of the Lord, in offering a purer worship, in temples not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

If then we are unhappy, the fault is our own. We do not love God with our whole hearts. We are not practical Christians. Let us reform everything amiss in our religious opinions, our dispositions, and our conduct, and we shall experience that peace which the world can neither give nor take away. We shall *feel* that God is love. B. W.

THE AWAKENING.

[By Mrs Hemans.]

"WHILE DAY ARISES THAT SWEET HOUR OF PRIME."

How many thousands are wakening now!
Some to the songs from the forest-bough,
To the rustling of leaves at the lattice-pane,
To the chiming fall of the early rain.

And some, far out on the deep mid-sea,
To the dash of the waves in their foaming glee,
As they break into spray on the ship's tall side,
That holds through the tumult her path of pride.

And some—Oh! well may *their* hearts rejoice,
To the gentle sound of a mother's voice;
Long shall they yearn for that kindly tone,
When from the board and the hearth 't is gone.

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And some in the camp, to the bugle's breath,
And the tramp of the steed on the echoing heath,
And the sudden roar of the hostile gun,
Which tells that a field must ere night be won.

And some, in the gloomy convict cell,
To the dull deep note of the warning bell,
As it heavily calls them forth to die,
While the bright sun mounts in the laughing sky.

And some to the peal of the hunter's horn,
And some to the sounds from the city borne;
And some to the rolling of torrent-floods,
Far 'midst old mountains, and solemn woods.

So are we roused on this chequer'd earth,
Each unto light hath a daily birth,
Though fearful or joyous, though sad or sweet,
Be the voices which first our upspringing meet.

But one must the sound be, and one be the call,
Which from the dust shall awake us all!
One, though to sever'd and distant dooms—
How shall the sleepers arise from their tombs?

RELIGION IN ADVERSITY.

Religion is necessary to our comfort in the dark hour of adversity. We are in a world of continual change. Many are now low in misfortune, who were once at the height of prosperity. This may be our condition. And when we are deprived of our competence or affluence; when we are slighted or deserted by the friends of our better fortunes; when the trials of poverty spread a gloom over our spirits; and the stern hand of justice compels us to relinquish the comforts of domestic life; if

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in this dark and trying hour, we have not the consolations of religion, but are reproached by our past lives; if we have been idle or dissipated, prodigal or covetous, proud or tyrannical, cruel or unjust; if we have insulted the virtuous citizen, or defrauded the industrious laborer, or abused the honest dependant, or driven from our presence the deserving object of charity; if we have slighted the teachings of Jesus, and neglected the service and worship of God; if this be our character, miserable indeed must be our condition. We shall be destitute of that self-approving conscience, the loss of which all earthly things cannot supply; and with the loss of this, we lose all the supports of religion. For if our own hearts condemn us, God is greater than our hearts, and knoweth all things.

But on the other hand, when the storms of adversity press heavily upon us, whether we have fallen from affluence or competence, or have always lived in honest poverty, if we have been temperate and frugal and industrious in our habits; if we have been honest and upright and open in our dealings; if we have bestowed our charitable offerings on the poor and unfortunate; if we have been meek, and affable, and unassuming in our deportment; if we have cultivated the graces and virtues of the christian character; if we have devoted our powers and talents to the service of God; if we have the approving testimony of our own mind in these things, we shall not be miserable. And let what will come, let poverty beset us in its most appalling forms; let every earthly friend forsake us; we shall not be utterly forsaken of happiness. We shall have that conscious integrity, that moral purity, that religious elevation of soul—which

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will confer more exalted felicity than the world with all its blandishments can ever give, or with all its frowns can ever take away. And we shall have one friend who will never desert us, one friend who will always listen to our supplications; one almighty friend and Father who will cherish us in his own bosom long after this world and all its changing scenes shall have passed into oblivion. If then we would have comfort in adversity, we must lay its foundation in religion. We must ever let the heavenly instructions of Jesus dwell on our minds, and be the governing principles of all our actions, until we become Christians in faith, and temper, and practice. And then we shall be prepared to triumph, yea, to rejoice in adversity. B. W.

CONSOLATION SOUGHT AND FOUND.

[From MS. of J. Bowring.]

When the clouds of desolation
Gather o'er my naked head,
And my spirit's agitation,
Knows not where to turn or tread;
When life's gathering storms compel me
To submit to wants and woes,
Who shall teach me, who shall tell me
Where my heart may find repose?

To the stars I fain would reach me?
There the God of light must dwell:
Sacred teachers! will ye teach me?
Blest instructors! will ye tell,
How my voice may reach that portal
Where the seraphs crowd in throngs;
How the lispings of a mortal
May be heard 'midst angel songs!

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God and Father! Thou did'st give me
Sorrow for my portion here;
But thy mercy will not leave me
Helpless, struggling with despair;
For to Thee, when sad and lonely,
Unto Thee, alone I turn,
And to Thee, my Father! only
Look for comfort when I mourn.

Nor in vain---for light is breaking
'Midst the sorrows, 'midst the storms;
And methinks I see awaking
Heavenly hopes and angel forms;
And my spirit waxes stronger,
And my trembling heart is still;
And my bosom doubts no longer
Thine inexplicable will.

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1 JOHN, v. 20.

And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true: and we are in him that is true, through his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.

JOHN says, that our Lord had given them "an understanding," because it is by means of the discoveries made to us by Jesus Christ, that we become acquainted with the divine character. That we "may know *the true one*," or "the true God," is a better rendering of the next phrase. To be in the true one, in God, is to possess those dispositions which he approves, to be united to him as obedient children to a tender parent. And this is through Jesus Christ, who came to show us the Father, and died to bring us unto God. If any object to the different translation of the same preposition in the two in-

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stances of its occurrence, we reply, that the old English version has the same rendering,—"through his Son Jesus Christ;"—and further, that this preposition has different senses attached to it in precisely similar cases. Thus in Romans, i. 9, "Whom I serve *with* my spirit, *in* the gospel of his Son." And again, xv. 13, "The God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound *in* hope, *through* the power of the Holy Ghost." See also Acts, vii. 44; Galatians, ii. 20; Ephesians, i. 3—6, ii. 6, iii. 21; Colossians, i. 2—6, ii. 7; 2 Thessalonians, i. 4; 1 John, iv. 9. Besides, what sense is there in the words as they now stand in our version? "We are *in him* that is true, in *his* Son Jesus Christ." In him—in his son. The want of an intervening particle was felt by our translators when they inserted "even." But the sense is not thus restored. By giving the preposition a signification which it very commonly has in other places—"through"—we remove all obscurity.

The next clause in the verse has been confidently produced as an explicit declaration that Jesus is the true God. But the pronoun there refers to a remoter antecedent, and not to the nearer, to Jesus Christ. A similar instance occurs in 2 John, vii. "This is a deceiver." The nearest antecedent is Jesus Christ; but we are obliged by the sentiment, and the rest of the passage, to refer the pronoun to one farther back. In Hebrews, v. 6, 7, the relative is used in like manner. "Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears, unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared, though he were a son, yet learned he obedience," &c. The nearest antecedent here is Melchise-

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dec, but the pronoun "who" relates to "Christ" in the verse but one preceding. See likewise John, vi. 49, 50; 1 John, ii. 22; Acts, iv. 10, 11, vii. 18. "Till another king arose, which knew not Joseph. The same dealt subtilely with our kindred." The pronoun properly relates to Joseph, but we know the charge itself applies to the king, and so refer to the remoter instead of the nearer antecedent. But we have no more reason for so doing, than in the case before us. For here also we know that Jesus himself has declared, in words recorded by John too, that *his* Father is the *only* true God. We are sure then, that John does not mean to contradict his master, and interpret his words accordingly.

It must be remarked that in the immediately preceding words, the apostle had distinguished Jesus Christ from the true God, whom he came to make known to us, and whose Son he is called, and it is doing violence to his subsequent language to apply it to Jesus. "The Son of God hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in *him* that is true, through *his* Son Jesus Christ." This is the true God, or he that is true, the true one. Can we think John means to say that Jesus is the true God, whom he, being his Son, came to reveal? Should we so interpret any other writer?

The clause was understood by the Fathers of the three first centuries, as referring to God, the Father, and not to Jesus Christ, his Son. It is to be regarded, probably, as an elliptical sentence, closing in a summary manner, the course of previous remark. His observations had chiefly related to the divine testimony and promises, and to Jesus Christ as the medium through whom the know-

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ledge of God is communicated, and by faith in whom the promises of God are appropriated to ourselves. His mind turning on these thoughts, he naturally concludes with this reflection. "This is the true God of whom I have spoken to you, and this the eternal life which he has given to us in his Son. Serve him only, and keep yourselves from idols."

INTEMPERANCE.

The following statement may help to convince the most sceptical that men may, under the most unfavorable circumstances, be redeemed from the slavery of appetite, and must furnish encouragement to those who are uniting their efforts for this object.

The Mines of the Rhode Island Canal Company have for some time been under the superintendence of Mr Samuel Clowes. When this gentleman assumed the direction of the works, the men were allowed a certain quantity of spirituous liquors. The prescribed indulgence was attended there, as it must be anywhere, with occasional excess. This excess was found to be attended with its usual accompaniments, occasional sickness, quarrelsome dispositions, domestic cruelty, want of foresight and frugality, and the numberless ills of poverty. Among forty or fifty workmen, not less than four or five were generally on the sick-list, and incapacitated from labor. The wives and children of the workmen frequently applied to the Superintendent, to protect them from the brutality and violence to which they were subjected.

It was moreover sufficiently manifest that the stimulus which produced these effects was not more prejudicial

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to the industry, than to the peace and good order of this little community. Under these circumstances Mr Clowes determined to abolish the use of ardent spirits altogether, and has completely succeeded. The remnant of the spirit cask which survived this experiment, was actually resold to the shopkeeper from whom it was bought. Since this period there has been rarely more than one or two persons on the sick-list, and generally none. No complaints have been made of the disturbance of family peace.

The children who were before covered with rags, are now decently clad. The families of the workmen have many of them provided themselves with pigs, fowls, &c. And what is perhaps a more striking circumstance than any of these mentioned, is this, that all the workmen, as well as their families, have manifested the strongest proofs of gratitude and respect to the Superintendent. Many of them have frequently declared that if he should leave the works, go where he might, they would go with him.

But how has this reform been effected? It would be difficult to give a full idea of this. First of all the Superintendent began by setting an example of abstinence not only from ardent spirits but even from wine. His reason for the disuse of wine was, that the men would regard that as a *substitute* in his case, while they had none.

In the next place one or two of the most intelligent and respectable of the men were persuaded without a suspicion on the part of the others, of the moving spring, to set them an example. Favors were shown to those who denied their appetites—but without any distinct declaration that they were intended as a reward for such denial. Care was taken to set forth the evils of intemperance by

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circulating occasional accounts from newspapers, &c. of remarkable instances of crime or suffering produced by that cause. Various other modes of appeal to the understanding of these men were employed. The general idea which pervaded the whole plan of reform was, that the men should be induced to adopt it not as a matter imposed upon them, but of their own free choice operating through the example of their Superintendent, and of one or two others under his immediate influence.

Thus every step in the progress of reformation rewarded the labor with which it was made, and increased the willingness to go forward.

A reform of this kind could hardly be attempted under more discouraging circumstances. The irregularities of labor to which men employed in mining are exposed—their unseasonable hours—and their exposure to changes from warm to cold, and from wet to dry—furnish an apology for the use of ardent spirits which few laborers have.

It would be needless to state a stronger case than this to show that fatigue, hardship, and exposure of various kinds, do not require the aid of ardent spirits.

Let the same good sense, and energy be employed by those who have the charge of our manufactories and workshops, and the same beneficent results will follow. It must not be forgotten that those who lead in the way of reform, must manifest their sense of its importance by their own example.

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SPIRITUAL INFLUENCE.

[From Jay's Lectures.]

"WHATEVER the people of the world may think, the religion of Christ is a *reasonable* service! Nothing can be more distinguishable from groundless belief, from the enthusiasm of ignorant impulses, from a mere mass of unintelligible feeling. It commences in the renewing of the *mind*. It is carried on through the medium of *thought*. Nothing can be moral that does not arise from design, and is not influenced by motive. Spiritual agencies are *not* like the cures of a charm, of whose efficiency no account can be given. They are *not* like the forced motions of a machine insensible of its workings and results. Neither are they like the operations of the physical powers in the human body; these are carried on independently of the mind and will. The digestive action, the secretion of the fluids, the circulation of the blood, go on as well, if not better, when we are *asleep*, as when we are awake. This, it would appear, is too much the notion some entertain of the work of the spirit. But this is the perversion of the language of Scripture. According to the sacred writers, as to religious influences, we are not only the subjects, but the instruments. What is done in us, is done by us. God is the author of every thing good; our progress is from him; but he does not *carry* us along in the way everlasting, but enables us to *walk*. He works in us, but it is to *will* and to *do*. We are not only impressed, but employed. Faith and repentance are the gifts of God, yet *we* believe and repent, *not* God."

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[*Remarks.*]

What Unitarian does not recognise in this extract the very language of his own faith. Yet this is the representation of a man whose life, now far spent, has been devoted to an orthodox ministry. So true is it that our differences are often, more in word than in truth, and where nothing *but* reason and scripture are consulted, that they who walk apart, do yet mind the same thing. Why is it that a Unitarian is sometimes supposed to magnify human power, and set aside just sentiments of man's dependence on divine aid, while he only speaks of both in a manner which is common to him and his orthodox brethren? Dr Jay is no heretic, but beloved and revered by all evangelical people. And are we heretics then, because we say as he does, that God's influence on moral agents, is by *motive* and not by *charm*, nor by physical force, nor by force of any kind?

Whatever power man has, it was given by God. Now it would seem as if they who most insist upon this power, made most of the divine gift. They do not slight it as worthless, too little for the purpose it is designed for, or not capable of being used, till it is impelled into action by a miracle. The powers we possess *must* be good for something, or God would never have bestowed them. Good for what? To what end has God given us a moral nature? That we may use, and enlarge, and improve it, to his glory, and our own happiness. While we are endeavoring to do this, heavenly influence is within us and upon us. We are cooperating with God. He helps our infirmities, though not our slothfulness. And our success through all our intellec-

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tual progress is from Him who first imparted the spirit that is in us, gave the understanding its susceptibility of improvement, and adapted the powers in us to the scene in which they are developed and employed. Nay, we rejoice in the conviction that light from the Father of lights, is poured in upon the soul, in direct rays; that there is a communion with God, which implies actual contact, nearness without an intervening medium, influence of spirit upon spirit. But who may aspire to this? On whom does God confer this happiness? Not, we may dare to suppose, upon such as desire it not, as do not seek it, as are in no degree prepared to receive it. Or if the love of the Creator prompt to the rescue of a creature whose alienation is voluntary, stubborn, and reckless, the secret is withheld from us, and we are presumptuous to count upon it, as if it were the method divine wisdom has chosen for our recovery from sin. The scriptures represent God as drawing nigh to such only as draw nigh to him, as having respect only to those who turn unto him. "Thus saith the high and lofty one, who inhabiteth eternity, whose name is holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the hearts of the contrite ones. They that *wait* on the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up as eagles; *they* shall run and not be weary, and they shall walk and not faint."

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MIDNIGHT HYMN.

[By Hannah More.]

WHERE'ER I am, whate'er I see,
Eternal Lord, is full of Thee;
I feel Thee in the gloom of night,
I view Thee in the morning light.

When care distracts my anxious soul,
Thy grace can every thought control;
Thy word can still the troubled heart,
And peace and confidence impart.

If pain corrode my broken rest,
Or if corroding griefs molest,
Soon as the Comforter appears
My sighs are hush'd and dried my tears.

Thy wisdom guides, Thy will directs,
Thy arm upholds, Thy power protects;
With Thee when I at dawn converse,
The shadows sink, the clouds disperse;

Then, as the sun illumes the skies,
Oh sun of righteousness, arise!
Dispel the fogs of mental night,
Being of beings, Light of light!

SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

MATERNAL INSTRUCTION.

OF all the relations, issuing from the benevolence of God in the structure of the moral world, perhaps there is none, in which his goodness may be so distinctly traced, and in the performance of whose duties, so pure and delicate a perception of happiness is connected, as in the *maternal*. The benignant design of this

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connexion blending together our sympathies, our happiness, and our duty, is too apparent to be mistaken. It suggests to every mother her obvious duty—the moral education of her child—and on that mother, who feels deeply anxious to cooperate with God in the accomplishment of his divine purpose, that of preparing herself and her offspring for a higher and happier state of existence, by the faithful, and intelligent, and conscientious discharge of the duties pertaining to this endearing relation—duties which she only can fully discharge—the necessity of beginning her labors of discipline in due season—even with the dawn of infant existence—need not be urged—for well she knows that her infant's safety consists in the success of her efforts "to sow the good seed,"—and to prevent the enemy, ever watchful, from "sowing tares."

At this early period, her care will be chiefly interested in securing the *physical* comfort and happiness of her sweet charge by the invariable exercise of the kindest and tenderest offices of affection and love. The very helplessness and innocence of infancy appeal in the strongest and most persuasive language for safety and protection to the mother's heart. Her feelings will prompt her to regard her infant's numerous wants and necessities, and by the exercise of those charities, which the Author of all good has wisely fitted her, as if by intuition, to confer, to anticipate, supply and relieve them. By these repeated acts of kindness, in due time, the infant becomes conscious of the existence of the benevolent being from whom its happiness is derived. The sweet fountain from which it receives nutrition, the soft bosom on which it reposes, from whose embrace it awakes to meet the eye of maternal fondness, and the caresses of

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maternal love, develope in its breast the feelings of gratitude, affection, and love—and denote the commencement of its moral life—the time for *moral* discipline to begin. With all the fondness which a mother alone can feel, and all the tenderness which she alone can exercise, in giving the incipient springs of feeling their proper direction, she will enter upon her delightful, though arduous task, assured of direction from on high. As an agent of the Supreme Power, she will feel herself entrusted with a spirit destined for immortality, on which she is urged, by every consideration, to shed that redeeming influence, which shall preserve it from earthly pollution and conduct it to the skies.

Her infant, now in paradise, she will endeavor to sustain there, by removing forbidden fruit from its view. By methods suited to its nature, she will develope the faculties of its mind, and the affections of its heart, directing them to the attainment of good. Herself she will regard, as the object on which its young affections should first place themselves, and to which they were designed by the Supreme Parent, most fondly to cling—attending to the voice of the Divine Instructer, whose friendly monitions address her through her infant, she proceeds, with confidence, in her good work.

Having obtained, by kind and affectionate treatment, the whole love and confidence of her infant, she feels herself in the sure possession of a power over its volitions, by which she ensures its ready and willing obedience. Her laws are few and simple; they are but modifications of nature's. She wins to duty by the influence of love; to fear and coercion she seldom appeals. In cases of transgression, she points to the resulting unhappiness,

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and teaches, by experience, the inseparable connexion between disobedience and misery, between obedience and happiness. By favorable influences she forms the habits and associations of her infant—herself its example. By her constant kindness and cheerfulness, she will induce a happy sweetness of temper; and by the constant presence of her example, upon the heart of her infant, she will form its character to that good, and amiable, and lovely image, which she has assumed for her standard. She makes her infant happy, because it is good —because it is sure of its mother's love.

Obedient to the laws of its juvenile code, the infant will become assimilated to hers. Making reason and conscience the only tests of truth and obedience, the intellectual powers of her child are early applied to their legitimate purpose. By the pleasing hope of preserving its mother's affection, and by an intelligent consciousness of duty performed, the infant's heart becomes opened to every kind, and benevolent, and complacent affection. The mother will fix the great rule of action in its mind. She will make it conscious, from experience, that the only way to ensure its own happiness, is by endeavours to promote that of all around it, that lives, and moves, and breathes. She thus prepares it to engage with ardor in every benevolent design—to taste the sweet luxury of doing good. Her young philanthropist lives as a moral and intellectual being.

Alive to every surrounding object; conscious of its innocence; enjoying and returning the affections of all with whom it dwells; the infant heart, in due time, recognises a higher power, which it feels is good. To this power it extends its affections, and rejoices in being the

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recipient of his love. Trained from infancy in the school of Jesus, it owns him as Saviour and Guide. Religious feeling rises in its breast and sheds a kindly influence on all its pursuits. Assured that God is everywhere present, "*that in him it lives and moves and has its being*," and that, when this period of existence closes, he designs to raise it, through an intelligent faith in the truths of his Son, and a life of obedience, to a higher and happier state—the feelings of reverence, and gratitude, and love, spontaneously rise in its breast, accompanied by a sense of the Divine approbation, which lead it to the intelligent, and cheerful, and happy performance of every duty, and induce it to make nearer and nearer approaches toward the "Father of Light and life."

OBJECTIONS TO SUNDAY SCHOOLS CONSIDERED.

The first objection made to Sunday schools is, that they take from parents a most important office, that of giving their children religious instruction. If, say some, the character should be well known in order to be improved, who can know it so well as the parent? This is true, and deserves consideration.

It is well understood that a large majority of the children who attend Sunday schools, consist of a class whose parents are destitute, and whose domestic duties are such as preclude their giving attention to anything but common, every-day duties; if these are well performed, they expect no more of their children, as they have neither time nor knowledge to give them religious instruction. Are there not many families thus situated? If we look around us

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with a design to ascertain this fact, we shall find that this class of persons compose a large portion of society; and if the question was asked, why do these children attend the Sunday school? why do not their parents instruct them? we should without hesitation reply, that it was the only place where they could receive religious instruction, that it was *impossible* for their parents to give it to them. And the number of children thus situated is very numerous; they compose the largest part of the poorer classes. To such children this instruction is invaluable.

But are these the only class of children that attend these schools? No. There are others, who are induced, from various causes to attend them, and whose parents are able to impart instruction. I am far from defending this course. Still I think a parent may send a child to these schools without relinquishing the pleasing part of instructing himself, and find it of great use; and it is an important recommendation of these schools, that they are happily calculated to aid parents in the religious instruction of their children. But allowing that the parent gives suitable instruction at home, without such aid, has he not to encounter many difficulties? Does he not find it hard to fix the attention in the domestic circle, and to produce that excitement in the youthful mind, which is necessary in order to make any considerable progress? Would he not find many times study and investigation necessary in order faithfully to perform this duty; and when all is done, a want of interest manifested by those for whose good it is designed? On the other hand, let the children be sent to the Sunday school—let the course of instruction pursued by the teacher there be understood by the parent, and when the time for instructing his children arrive

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let the exercise be a review of the lessons taught at the school; let him require an account of them, and give them, if necessary, some additional lessons, more particularly adapted to their character and wants, and the effects of such combined instructions will be greater than could be expected from either alone. The preparation for private instruction is thus made at the school, where the disposition to learn is cherished by many influences to be met nowhere else in so great a degree. Association with their youthful acquaintance, in their tasks, will itself be a means of exciting the liveliest interest, and securing a more willing and patient attention. Many obstacles to the success of domestic tuition, are almost wholly done away at the school; and the lessons at home give new efficacy to those which are learned abroad.

Another objection is nearly as important. It is said, Do not these schools give parents the idea that if their children attend the Sunday school, their religious instruction is sufficiently attended to, and with this impression cause them to relax in their own exertions? Every one is sensible of the readiness with which we seek excuses for the non-performance of our duties; but the children of parents, who would be satisfied with this, must indeed require a better teacher. And no better means could be adopted to arouse the parents to reflection, and satisfy them of their error, than to send their children to a well-conducted Sunday school. The many questions which would be asked them by their children, respecting their lessons at the school—and they would not be satisfied till they had related all that was done there, and how much they learned, how highly they enjoyed themselves, and how happy they were while with their teachers—

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would compel the parent's attention. The interest of the children would call forth a corresponding interest in the parents, and they would be led to see their own duty in a proper light.

And shall we make no account of the effect of witnessing the interest of others in the welfare of their children? Can it be, that they who hear so much concerning religious instruction should see no occasion, embrace no opportunity to impart it? Will those little faults, which are the beginning of evil, and which can be known only to a parent, receive no correction? The parent, when he rebukes his child, will perceive with gratitude, that the lesson makes a deeper impression, from the previous influence of the Sunday school teacher; and this will, while it produces the desired amendment, be no small testimony of the assistance of these schools to the parent.

The imperfect manner of instructing in these schools is an objection which is sometimes advanced. But with all the defects to which these infant institutions are liable, they have been eminently useful. It is true that in times past the instruction has consisted too much in storing the memory with verses of scripture and hymns, without a very careful inquiry to see if they were understood; but this is fast passing away, and great as the objection may be, it is in a fair way to be overcome by the rapid improvements which are now in progress. Let us be careful not to confound what these schools have been with what they now are. If in so short a period, so much has already been attained, we cannot justly complain of the defects which are yet to be removed, as if these were reasons sufficient for the abandonment of

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the institutions themselves. Let the modes of instruction be criticised with a view to an amended system. But let not the instruction itself be relinquished as useless, merely because not yet quite as perfect as it might be, and probably will be. The unquestionable testimony of experience has been, that so far from being unnecessary, injurious, burdensome, Sunday schools have been the instrument of most important and permanent benefits, even to such as *could* have done well without them; while to a far larger class, they have been the *only* and the *successful* means of the best knowledge, the purest virtue, and the most elevated enjoyments. R.

THE CHRISTIAN TEACHER'S MANUAL.

SINCE religious tuition began to form so prominent a branch in education, and to command a notice and care somewhat proportioned to its importance, the want of suitable guides in the best methods of instruction, has been felt. We think one reason why there are no more Sunday Schools, for example, is that very many do not feel competent to say how such institutions ought to be conducted. Religious teaching is a new business to most, except to the clergy, and those conscientious parents, who have all the model they need, and all the motive, in their own heart. It is important, therefore, that all the light which those who have studied the subject can throw upon it, should be afforded for the aid of such as are just beginning to give their attention to this part of education. We are sure that the publication of

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a work exclusively devoted to Christian teaching, will be highly acceptable to the community, and serve in many ways, to promote improvements in the common modes of imparting religious knowledge.

Having read the first number of the Christian Teacher's Manual with very great satisfaction, we are prepared to wish it the happiest success. The views which are expressed, relative to the qualifications for the office of teacher, are alone sufficient to create a strong confidence in the ability and the motives with which this work will be conducted. We may be permitted to extract the following, as an instance which warrants this remark. "It is often said by those who have become interested in Sunday schools, 'I should like to be a teacher if I thought myself capable of it; I would gladly teach if I knew how.' Now what are the requisites for a good teacher in a Sunday school? We do not think them few or small, but we do think them attainable by the humblest Christians, provided they set out with the most important of all qualifications, and without which none other can be effectual—and that is, *interest*, deep, sincere, heartfelt interest: interest in the cause of our most holy religion; interest in the human mind for which this religion is formed, and to which it is adapted; living, intimate, affectionate interest in the characters, and for the everlasting happiness of the children they undertake to teach. No one should take a class in a Sunday school merely because this or that friend wishes they should, or because the clergyman has requested it—or because they think it is proper to be engaged in some good work. If their hearts do not warm to the labor, they will do little or no good—they may do harm—no

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matter how much knowledge they may have, or how scrupulously they may fulfil their routine of duties; if the spirit is not there, children will perceive it,—they have an unerring instinct on this point. It is through their affections, by sympathy, that they acquire their first ideas of anything; a child watches the looks of its parents, it catches their feelings even when their words speak another language; a child's heart is a sure touchstone to ascertain the earnestness and sincerity of those who address it."

AN ABSTRACT OF THE BIBLE HISTORY.

This little work was composed for the use of a Sunday school, and, four years ago, passed to the seventh edition in England. It is now presented to the American public, for the first time, and with considerable alterations and additions. The editor, Mr Jenks, deserves the thanks of the community for the care he has bestowed upon it. He has greatly simplified its phraseology. He has given, in several instances, an improved interpretation of Scripture. He has corrected many errors that had crept into the former editions. He has very much increased the number of questions for examination, so that they now amount to more than six hundred. He has divided the work throughout into sections, and marked the questions accordingly. And, in general, he seems to have spared no pains to render the edition accurate, and suited to the purpose of the author. We do not believe his labor will go unrequited. It is an excellent work, both as to its design and execution, deserving a place, we think, among the most valua-

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ble of our juvenile books. It was originally intended to provide for children too young to peruse with advantage our common Scriptures in course, a brief, simple, and connected account of the principal events, and characters described in the sacred volume, which should be at once interesting and instructive to them. But it is not only adapted to the juvenile mind. It will be found to be useful to persons already considerably conversant with the Scriptures, as it is fitted to refresh their memories in respect to important facts, to enrich their minds with the fine moral reflections which it uniformly connects with the historical incidents it relates, and, by presenting the sentiments of Scripture in a new dress, to destroy that insensibility as to the meaning of the sacred writers, which a frequent reading of them, and a long familiarity with their language are so apt to produce. To the parent, and the Sunday school teacher, especially, it will be a valuable acquisition, as it is excellently well adapted to serve as a text-book, which they can expound and amplify, and from which they can gain those thoughts, images, and feelings, which catch the attention and captivate the mind of youth. B.

INTELLIGENCE.

New Publications.—A reprint of the Sermons of the protestant preachers of the last two centuries, is in progress in Paris. The whole of the works of the Continental Reformers of the 16th century, including some unpublished treatises, are collecting and reprinting in a cheap form in Germany.

Bishop of Basle's Charge.—The Bishop of Basle, in an episcopal letter addressed to his clergy, expresses "his profound grief

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that versions of the New Testament are distributed among the faithful."

Saxon Ordinance.—The King of Saxony has recently issued an ordinance, forbidding, under heavy penalties, any Saxon, under the age of twentyone, or of weak intellect, changing his religion, except in the article of death. A Saxon, secretly professing a new faith, is condemned to pay a large fine, and loses his civil rights for ever, on discovery.

Substitute for the Sacramental Test.—The following declaration is inserted in the Bill recently brought up in the British Parliament, by which the Test Act is formally repealed. "I do solemnly declare that I will never exercise any power, authority, or influence, which I may possess by virtue of the office of ———— to injure or weaken the protestant church as it is by law established within this realm, or to disturb it in the possession of any rights or privileges to which it is by law entitled." This is a declaration, not merely for Dissenters, but all others. It is to be made by all on taking office in corporations, and by all who receive office, emolument, or trust under the Crown, on its being required of them by the competent lawful authorities. It is explained as not designed to hinder Dissenters from doing whatever they were before protected by the law in doing, for their faith and worship. But will this explanation, or any other, save the conscience of him who thus declares, and then by example, instruction at home, conversation abroad, and the whole weight of his opinion and authority, strives to give all possible effect to a system, diametrically opposed to the State Religion?

The British Reformation Society.—An association with this title was instituted a year ago, having for its object the spread of protestantism in Ireland.

The Editor would express his gratitude very earnestly to the few who have kindly contributed to this work hitherto. He is compelled to renew his solicitations to those who have the same cause at heart, for that aid without which his labors must prove unavailing.

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